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EDUCATION CRAZE

AND ITS

RESULTS.

SCHOOL BOARDS, THEIR EXTRAVAGANCE AND
INEFFICIENCY.

BY

D. C. L.

"The public elementary scholar, now emerges from the six Standards, a mere useless pedant, his head filled with worthless stuff, and without either the will or the power to turn it to account."—*Times*.

LONDON:

HARRISON AND SONS, 59, PALL MALL, S.W.,

By Appointment to Her Majesty and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

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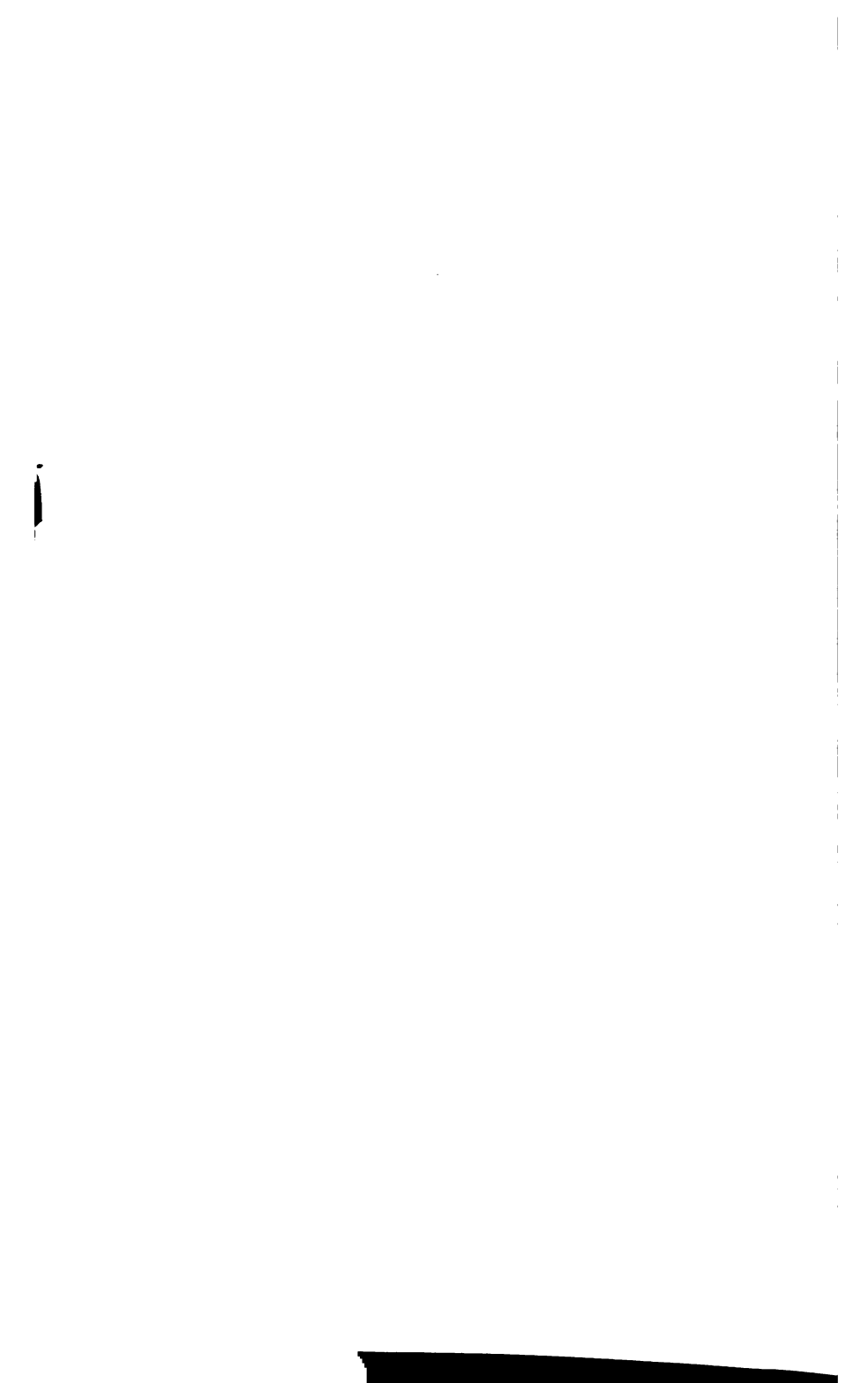


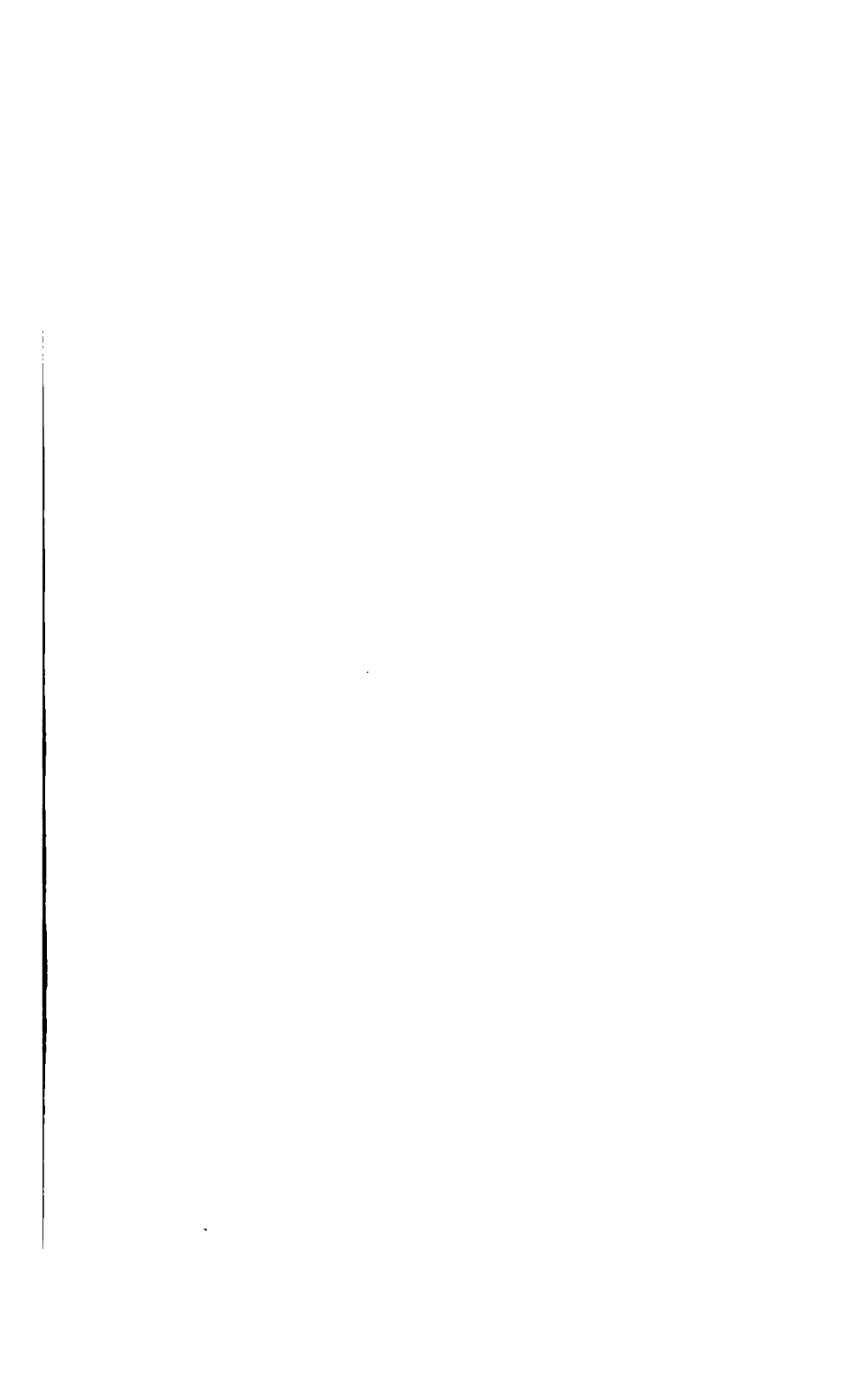
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“Rough-hew their purposes how they will, individuals, classes, nations, are all receiving an unconscious education, over which they have little control, from the divine Schoolmaster, who, looking upon the whole human race as his scholars, and generations as his successive classes, is preparing us, by the gradual development of our energies and talents, for that loftier position in the scale of existence, to which man is eventually destined.”

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INTRODUCTION.

THERE is a very well-founded and rapidly-extending opinion that the Elementary Education Act of 1870 was little better than a huge blunder, and that its operations, however well intended, have already wrought, and are daily causing, irreparable mischief throughout the country. The expression of sentiments to this effect is to be heard from all classes, with little modification and with no attempt to disguise them.

The object of the following pages is to demonstrate that these complaints are not groundless, and may be attributed partly—

- I. To the undeniable extravagance of the system, or
- II. To its inefficiency in carrying out its proposed objects.
- III. Even admitting that it has achieved some portion of the work it undertook, none of the alleged benefits it has conferred, could in any way be deemed equivalent to the burden it imposes upon those who unfortunately have to provide the ways and means.
- IV. The tuition actually imparted, must always unavoidably be of the most superficial kind, and can never be otherwise than useless to the recipients, because it has practically no relation either to their present position or future career.
- V. The fallacy underlying the entire system, consists in the adoption, as a truism, of the supposition that a certificate

showing that the holder has passed, the best part of three or five years, at a Board school, will operate as an immediate introduction to remunerative employment.

VI. It is a still greater mistake to imagine that the ability to read, is any such inestimable boon as is pretended. In by far, the majority of cases, practical experience shows that the only real result is manifested in the rapidly-increasing circulation of vast quantities of unwholesome, pernicious and immoral productions;—of works of the vilest tendencies, their prevalent characteristic being, open defiance of all religion, subordination, law and order.

VII. The Voluntary Schools efficiently supplied all that was needed to those who were likely to benefit by useful instruction. What ought to have been done, therefore, had it been found expedient to supplement their resources from the finances of the State, would have been, to have augmented the number of these schools, as well as the stipends of the teachers, and if requisite, to have placed them under more complete supervision.

“For many years,” said the *Times* a few days since, “Parliament has been indulging in legislation that in the last century would have been expected rather from the Archbishop of Cambray than from a company of men of business standing on their practical character. It has ordered miracles to be wrought, commanding successively cleanliness, health, instruction and a good deal more, without having provided the least security that its commands shall be obeyed,” or, it might well have been added, without giving reasonable consideration to the consequences that were certain to ensue, when unlimited powers are conferred upon inexperienced persons, to borrow and squander vast sums of money belonging to other people, whose remonstrances, as will presently be seen, are habitually treated with the most sovereign contempt.

On the 13th of February, 1878, at a conclave of the

London School Board, assembled in their palatial abode on the Embankment, Sir Charles Reed presiding, a deputation from various vestries and district Boards, was introduced by two members of the Board for the division of Westminster. They presented a series of important and very sensible resolutions passed at a meeting of delegates from numerous parishes.

That meeting was unanimously of opinion that "the great and rapid increase of the education rate, affords ground for grave apprehension, and calls for a rigid inquiry into the policy and procedure of the Board." It urged further "that the original object and intention of the Act of 1870, was to gather into schools, those children running the streets," but that, instead of doing this, the Board was educating those who had been previously educated in voluntary schools. The delegates protested against the sum of £900,000 being borrowed for School Board purposes, until it could be shown that "all the existing voluntary and Board schools in each district of the metropolis had been filled, and that the fees were levied according to the circumstances of the parents of the different children."

The deputation also gave expression to the very rational opinion, that when education was given, at the expense of the rates, it should not go beyond what was actually necessary to get the children (when old enough) into employment suitable for them.

Of course, practical business-like suggestions, savouring so much of sound common sense, were not likely to be palatable to the people before whose consideration they were brought. One of them forthwith vehemently protested "against its being expected that, at the demand of self-elected parish representatives, representing a few parishes only; the efforts of the Board, which represented the whole of the rate-payers of London, should be at once paralysed and thwarted" (!) In other words, the Board—having for a length of time been

acting like the man, who, moved by a charity sermon, deliberately emptied the pockets of his slumbering neighbours into the plate—becomes indignant at the bare thought of having its pleasant occupation stopped.

On the motion of the Chairman it was agreed—somewhat ironically it would seem—that the memorial should be “respectfully acknowledged.”

What amount of “respect” was paid to the strong remonstrances of various important parishes against the squandering propensities of “the Board,” may be inferred from their very next proceeding, when Mr. Freeman got up and reminded his colleagues, “That on the 5th December last the Board agreed to borrow a further sum of, not exceeding £60,000 (making £2,786,580 agreed to be borrowed up to that time from the Public Works Loan Commissioners for providing schools). This sum had been received from the commissioners, but the numerous payments for sites and buildings would very shortly exhaust the amount; and the finance committee now recommended the Board to borrow a further sum of, not exceeding £115,000 (making in all £2,901,580 to be borrowed up to the present time from the commissioners for providing schools). This amount would exhaust the sum of £50,000, which it was estimated would be required during the financial year ending March 31, 1878.”

At the following Board, a resolution was unanimously carried, to request the Metropolitan Board of Works to introduce a clause into their money bill, for the purpose of authorizing them to advance to the London School Board a sum of £75,000, to be used as “working capital,” and to be repaid by 50 equal annual instalments. This will probably be done, and the fleeced ratepayers will find themselves hopelessly loaded with a fresh burden of taxation, for half a century to come, and to the tune of £1,500 a year.

Of course people who have acquired a habit of manipu-

lating hundreds of thousands and millions belonging to others more lavishly than most prudent persons are wont to deal with their own shillings and pence, made no difficulty whatever about giving their assent to the proposed very simple operation! What to them was a trumpery £50,000 or £100,000 more or less, or the process of refunding it? If they were to deny themselves the gratification of voting away money, their principal occupation would be at an end. Away then with all reluctance, timid scruples and hesitation.

On the 14th Feb., there appeared in the *Times* a letter signed George Potter (member London School Board) in which he styles, the remonstrances against reckless extravagance, as "a strategic movement to the rear of human progress and the spread of national education."

Then follows a magniloquent paragraph, more redolent of the usual claptrap of Noodledom, than remarkable for logical deduction or the accuracy of the statements it sets forth:—

"The Board Schools are reducing ignorance, diminishing crime, lessening pauperism and inculcating among the poor, habits of cleanliness, thrift, temperance, and self-respect. It is well known that crime, ignorance, and pauperism are closely allied. It is much cheaper to pay for schools and education than for gaols and pauperism. Since the Education Act was passed seven years ago, we have paid for pauperism £100,000,000, and for crime £40,000,000, while the annual grants to our elementary schools have only been £10,200,000. The money spent on the two former is not only sunk, but lost; gone for ever; no return. Education is the best investment for the community. What is spent on it will yield a good percentage to the nation by increased wealth, increased power, and increased happiness. What a blessing it is that the poor children of London are now being educated! For that, the Education Act was passed, and to provide this education the School Board was called into existence. Let the poor children acquire knowledge. Knowledge is the necessity of their being. Knowledge will cheer their poor dwellings and enliven the dull round of their daily toil. Knowledge will dignify their labour, and polish their manners. Knowledge will lead them to become useful citizens, true patriots and faithful Christians."

Those who may chance to peruse this little volume, or will only take the trouble to question at random a few School Board children, will see how far Mr. Potter is correct in his

assertion about the reduction of ignorance. With respect to the diminution of crime being consequent upon the working of the School Board Act of 1870, no greater absurdity could possibly be enunciated. Any one who has any practical acquaintance with criminal procedure, knows perfectly well, that the trifling diminution within the last few years in the number of convictions, is altogether attributable to two distinct causes, one of them originating long before 1870.

An Act, passed several years previously, but which did not come into operation immediately, authorised magistrates to pass sentences for short periods, with the consent of prisoners, in lieu of committing them for trial. This has latterly considerably diminished the number of convictions recorded in parliamentary papers, as these returns have reference only to convictions at assizes and the quarter sessions. Another cause is the greatly-diminished allowance of late years paid to prosecutors and witnesses, consequently a vast number of people who have been robbed or plundered rather than increase their pecuniary losses, are often reluctant to proceed against the delinquents. There are a far greater number of such cases than of arrests. The mere fact, therefore, that committals and convictions are fewer than of yore, affords no proof whatever that "crime is diminishing." After all, however, there were in 1870 12,953 convictions in England and Wales; in 1871, 12,946; while in 1876, we find no less than 12,195. So that, even accepting this test, there is little ground for congratulation. In Scotland we actually have a small, but still a positive *increase*; for instance, in 1871 there were only 2,184 convictions; while in 1872 there were 2,259; in 1874, 2,231; and in 1875, 2,205. In 1875-76 in that country, the cost of "education" was £1,583,034! as much as the entire revenue of Switzerland. Mr. Potter again, greatly overstates the amount paid for pauperism, when he asserts that £100,000,000 have been disbursed under that head by this country in the

seven years between 1870-76 both inclusive. The precise amount paid in 1870, was £7,644,307, in 1871 £7,886,724, if we add even eight millions a year, for the five subsequent years the sum total would be little more than fifty-five millions and a half, so that in this calculation he is wrong to the extent of nearly *five and forty millions!* But of course that is a mere bagatelle, to a member of a Board which has already disbursed millions, and has unlimited prospective millions still at its disposal. Besides a very large proportion of the money sunk and lost (as Potter calls it) in the maintenance of paupers, went to defray the cost of clothing and feeding the aged and infirm. No amount of money lavished on Board Schools would at all events, be likely to diminish these items, nor are we likely for many years to come, to witness a diminution of the cost of administering justice, which even at present, does not, by a long way, cost as Potter maintains, five millions and a half a year. He adds triumphantly again, that the annual grants to elementary schools have only amounted in seven years to £10,200,000. Now here, there is an inaccuracy to the extent of £1,325,380. The parliamentary grants alone, in those seven years reached in the aggregate £11,535,380, while if we include the previous nine years—namely, 1862-69—parliamentary aid was rendered to the cause of education, to the extent of £17,275,198; but over and above this, come the enormous sums levied by local rates. These in the single year 1876, amounted in England and Wales to £868,318, for the present year with the rate steadily advancing, we may pretty surely anticipate a levy, to the extent of more than a million sterling!

The transparent jobbery of the whole of this stupendous “liberal” scheme, will be sufficiently apparent to any one who gives due attention to the details compiled in the ensuing pages. The Metropolitan Board assemble in an edifice said to have cost over £30,000, the interest on which, with

its costly furniture, fittings, insurance &c., cannot be put at less than £3,000 a year. The cost of the triennial elections adds another £3,000 a year. Then the staff, absorbing over £12,000 annually out of the rates, shows a constant annual disbursement of no less than eighteen thousand pounds!* It seems scarcely credible indeed, that it should be possible to throw away periodically upon so trumpery a business as the election of such a Board, a larger sum than many an important contest for the membership of a county, has cost ere now. At the last general election in 1873; 20 county seats were contested, at an expense of £142,232 6s. 7d. Each of the 42 successful candidates consequently paid £3,386 13s. for the expenses incident on his return. Nevertheless, true it is, that the second School Board election, cost no less than £8,709 4s. 4d. As there are five individuals elected for each of the ten Metropolitan districts, the poor ratepayers were doomed to pay £174 3s. 8d. for each of these worthies, not one of whom, in all probability, ever before had the slightest acquaintance with matters scholastic. Their chief employment subsequently, has been to impose taxes to a most serious extent, in order to educate the children of their more improvident and thriftless neighbours, for that, in plain language, is the upshot of the whole affair.

The spokesman for the Board, in his defence and that of his colleagues, consoles us for the heavy amercement we are undergoing, and shall have to submit to, for long years to come, with the comforting assurance, that it is helping to inculcate habits of "thrift and temperance;" but confront him, however, with stern facts, and all his pretentious rhetoric dis-

* For the year 1878-79, the estimate of current office expenses (exclusive of interest on cost of building, electioneering &c.) was £18,383; while the cost of compelling attendance; which for the present year swallowed up £27,413, will—next year—absorb, it is calculated, £28,720! so that taking everything into account, the outgoings of this establishment alone, will not be less next year, than about £1,000 a week!

solves into thin air. So far from any appearance either of the advance of temperance or of a diminution of drunkenness, we find all over the kingdom lamentations loud and deep, at the appalling increase of this degrading vice. The clergy of all ranks and of various creeds are uniting, to devise methods of staying its progress. At this very moment a chronic special committee of the House of Lords is sitting for the sole purpose of "inquiring into the causes of the *great increase* of drunkenness." At a meeting, held on the 13th of February last, Dr. Valpy French (Head-Master of King Edward the Sixth's School, Stratford-on-Avon) affirmed, "that as regarded temperance, general education had proved an utter failure, and that it had in too many instances *aided and abetted the cause of intemperance*." That this is not mere empty assertion, like Mr. Potter's, the following statistics sufficiently prove. There were in England and Wales, (exclusive of Middlesex and the Metropolitan district) in the year, ending at Michaelmas, 1876, no less than 62,475 public-houses; in the following year there were 60 more, or 62,535. In 1876 there were 40,690 beer and cider houses; in 1877 these were increased by 932. They now number 41,622. In 1876 there were 2,580 refreshment-houses with wine licences. At Michaelmas, 1877, there were 2,670. We now have, therefore, of licensed places, for affording facilities for drunkenness, 1,082 more than there were in 1876, and this does not include any in the Metropolitan District. Let us see how far the intelligent British workman avails himself of his opportunities. In 1877, the number of persons proceeded against, as drunk and disorderly, was no less than 166,005! But it must be borne in mind, that these are merely outrageous cases of drunkenness, that have actually come under the cognizance of the police! At the most moderate computation, there are at least ten times as many instances of domestic inebriety, frequently too attended with circumstances of brutal or even criminal violence, in which the culprit does not

happen to be given in charge. We may, for the present, take our leave of Mr. Potter. A little further on, it will be seen, what is the sort of "knowledge" he is so anxious, that "the poor children" should acquire in the "veneering shops" he eulogises so warmly, and see to what practical use their erudition is turned.

If the street Arab, is kept during the hours, he is compelled to give, to the acquisition of such knowledge as is provided for him, from plying his more congenial occupation of picking pockets or robbing hucksters' stalls, society has assuredly little cause for congratulation, if with sharpened wits and more matured cunning, he develops in due course into an accomplished Benson or an urbane and exemplary Dimsdale, the former of whom, recently successfully perpetrated frauds, to the amount of £20,000, and the other, in his vocation of an attorney, to the tune of half a million, while yesterday's *Times* reported the case of a defaulting clerk who had embezzled to the extent of £70,000. These gigantic robberies, like the artfully-concocted "prospectus swindles" of everyday occurrence, and involving, as many of them often do, the utter ruin of whole families, can only be perpetrated by "educated" rogues. So far as the Public is concerned, therefore, it would be far better to submit to the occasional abstraction of handkerchiefs and purses, rather than foolishly to squander millions, in order to rear, in alarmingly increasing numbers, an active army of needy youths, wholly unfitted for their position in the world, for whom no employment, suited to their cultivated intellects and fastidious tastes, can possibly be provided, and who, it is very certain, will employ, at the expense of the community, whatever knowledge may have been forced into them, in order "to cheer their poor dwellings," till the grip of the detective prematurely closes "the dull round of their daily toil," and interrupts for a while, the career of "these useful citizens, true patriots and faithful Christians."

But, apart from the wasteful extravagance of these School Boards, their mischievously aggressive tendencies and the absolute injustice of many of their high-handed proceedings are adding daily to their unpopularity. The folly of having entrusted such arbitrary powers as they wield, to persons, the greater part of whom could by no possibility have had any previous training for the work, is now fully recognised by all sensible men. Any one who has attentively observed the ill effects wrought by great schemes of centralisation, could not but have foreseen what must have ensued and what has actually happened, when in Middlesex and its vicinity, the educational jurisdiction, over four millions of inhabitants, was blindly handed over to some fifty people of no known administrative ability, and most of whom had some pet crotchet they were anxious to try, at the expense of the public and on the grandest scale possible, during the brief period they were allowed to hold seats on the Board. The one great object, in the pursuit of which, all differences were ignored, seemed to be, either openly or covertly to wage a war of extermination against all Voluntary Schools. Any such school can of course be utterly ruined in six months, by merely running up a Board School a few yards off, and opening it at nominal admission fees. No considerations of economy seem ever to restrain the zeal of these Boards. The more money they can borrow; the more work they can provide for their attorney, their architect and sites clerk, the more pleased do they seem with themselves and delighted with their operations.

The humblest situation in a Government office, from the hall-porter, or even the housemaid, to the various clerks in their several departments, is not tenable until the candidate has undergone the ordeal of a competitive examination. Yet, such was the consistent wisdom of a "liberal" legislature, that it allowed some of the most important interests in the country, together with, practically unlimited powers of taxation, to be

conferred on groups of "nobodies" without requiring the slightest guarantee of any sort as to their qualifications, abilities, or business habits! It further directed that every three years there should be a fresh accession of green hands, to learn the work anew, by commencing another series of experiments at the expense of the community. It has indeed, been well observed: "That the powers given to the London School Board are so vast, and have been so often misused, that it is high time there should be some authoritative limitation to the extent to which they may be exercised in mere antagonism to Voluntary Schools."

Should the reader deem it improbable that persons, professedly actuated by the purest motives, and avowedly desirous only of diffusing knowledge far and wide, should habitually let themselves loose against institutions often far superior to their own, and all devoted to the same object, one or two instances, selected from a vast number of others, will suffice to show some of the ways in which this war of extermination is being waged. The Rev. W. H. Turle, vicar of St. Matthew's, Westminster, states in his annual report on the schools in his parish:—

"Since my last report a Board school has been opened in Horseferry Road. The result, as was foreseen, has been a very serious drain upon the neighbouring schools; and, among others, St. Matthew's has been a great sufferer. I have it on independent and trustworthy testimony, that the boys' and girls' departments of the Board school, have been filled almost without an exception, from neighbouring schools. This is to be regretted, because the schools that have been thus depleted were all thoroughly efficient and well supplied with teachers and suitable apparatus. I should be the last to complain of the erection of a Board school, if the educational wants of the locality really justified it. But, in the present case, there was very little justification, as is proved by the fact, that the new school has simply been filled at the expense of those already existing, and at this very moment we have in St. Matthew's School vacant accommodation for more than 200 children, with an ample staff of teachers and good appliances. Very much the same could be said of the surrounding schools. If it is the policy of the London School Board to supplant all voluntary schools instead of supplementing them, then it is a question simply between the Board and the ratepayers; and if the latter choose to be saddled with an unnecessarily heavy rate, there is nothing more to be said on the matter; only it is not, perhaps, desirable that the whole

system of primary schools in London should be under one central management, the tendency of which would be to destroy all local interest in education. I may add that strong representations were made to the Board by those who knew this neighbourhood, with regard to the non-necessity of the school in Horseferry Road."

There is unfortunately an infinity of similar well-grounded complaints in almost every locality where a "Board" has been suffered to take root. A rural ratepayer states, truly enough, that :—

"Time and experience have by no means made Mr. Forster's measure more popular. On the contrary, many supporters of voluntary schools will readily double their subscriptions rather than suffer the peace and harmony of their parishes to be interrupted by the introduction of this expensive and unsatisfactory educational machinery. However, what appears to me to be the injustice of the system is alone sufficient to make it distasteful.

"I am a ratepayer in a parish of 1,460 acres, with a population of about eighty people. Formerly, having no school of our own, we paid towards the support of one in a neighbouring village, to which we sent our children. Upon the introduction of the new system, a School Board was threatened, and we were formed into a 'district' with three other parishes. All three are less in acreage, and two of them considerably larger in population. When the establishment of a Board seemed inevitable, because certain farmers in the other parishes refused to pay the voluntary rate, we appealed to the Education Department to be relieved from their undesirable partnership. But in vain. A Board was ordered, and we were included together, with the possibility of not having any voice in the management of the proposed new schools. This latter because our parish is so small, and cumulative voting is not admissible. In fact, at the next election it is quite probable that we, although contributing the largest share of funds, may not have a single representative on the new Board!

"In time a School Board for the united district was formed, and large schools have been built a mile from our parish, at such an inconvenient distance that one or two of the children go elsewhere. Towards the maintenance of this educational establishment we pay about £79 a year. We have now, I think, five children (one in excess of last year), who are bound to attend school. Formerly they were educated just as efficiently, only in a less imposing building and under less expensive direction, for about £37.

"The moral is—If you have a voluntary school keep it, and thus not only save half your rates, but also have the privilege of spending your money yourselves.

"A ratepayer in a neighbouring parish tells me a 2d. rate has proved sufficient to maintain their schools on the voluntary system. Our rate, I expect, will be 7d. or 8d."

The district of Wembley, in the parish of Harrow, affords a flagrant instance of the pernicious consequences of the inter-

meddling on the part of Educational authorities. Voluntary efforts had been made, to meet all that could possibly be required. One school had already been erected. This year another was to have been enlarged, and next year a third would have been built. This would have completed the arrangements, and there is every reason for believing that the schools would have been duly maintained. In the midst of these operations, however, the mother parish, from which Wembley has been ecclesiastically separated, declares for a School Board. The Education Department then announces that it does not recognise an area of less than a whole parish; this school-supporting district is therefore to be compulsorily included within the Harrow School Board district. The subscribers to the Voluntary Schools are, however, graciously permitted to continue their subscriptions! but they must also pay the rate, which, of course, many of them decline to do. There is, moreover, a considerable debt on the school recently erected, but the subscribers are informed that, though the Board may take over the school, it may not take over the debt, consequently the managers, being personally responsible, have to find the money. The mother parish is itself in evil case. It has beautiful schools valued at £6,500, but encumbered by a debt of £1,300. The managers offered to transfer the schools if the Board would pay the debt, but this, by the same rule, it cannot do. Under these circumstances it is not surprising to find that the managers refuse to hand over the schools. It is probable, too, that the luckless ratepayers will be heavily taxed, to build new schools, while the existing buildings are literally standing idle and useless! The ratepayers of Harrow could relieve themselves by subscribing £1,300 to pay off the debt, which would be cheaper than building new schools out of the rates. The case of Wembley is a pitiable one indeed, as in the present state of the law there is no possibility of remedy.

Almost from the first, the unpopularity of School Boards might have been predicted. The absurd cost of the elections, recurring as they do triennially, the feuds, bitter rivalries, fierce passions they rouse, not only between classes, but between different religious denominations, do not subside for years. The working expenses, again, are always far in excess of any possible accruing benefit. "Oh! but see," says the enthusiastic apologist, "see the good we are doing in all directions; behold hundreds of schools where none were before; thousands of teachers, myriads of pupils! Surely so much 'good' is worth all the money paid for it." But this is just begging the whole question. It will be clearly proved, in the following pages, that the good is infinitesimally small, and that the money does not come out of the pockets of the recipients of the benefit, such as it is, in which case no objection could be raised. On the contrary, the greater part of the ever-increasing rate, in the words of the *Times*, is "wrung from small householders, who are just able to keep their heads above water, who have a pride in independence, who educate their own children at their own cost, or at least—notwithstanding the aid of endowments—at a far heavier cost than the fees exacted in Board schools, and who grudge very bitterly a heavy increase of their rates, for the education of the class immediately below them."

It is mainly on their behalf, that this book has been compiled, and it is hoped, not altogether in vain.



“A writer, who builds his arguments upon facts, is not easily to be confuted. He is not to be answered by general assertions or general reproaches. He may want eloquence to amuse and to persuade; but, speaking truth, he must always convince.”

Junius.

THE EDUCATION CRAZE.

"NO SATISFACTORY EDUCATION WHATEVER, EVEN IN THE MOST ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS, IS AT PRESENT IMPARTED IN THE BOARD SCHOOLS OF THE METROPOLIS; AND WHILE PEOPLE ARE QUARRELLING ABOUT 'POLICIES,' LADS OF THIRTEEN ARE STILL GROWING UP, UNABLE TO SPELL AND TO COUNT."—*Times*.

THERE are few, who have had much experience in the world, who can have failed to note, how much greater is the amount of irreparable mischief wrought by well-intentioned Fatuity, than by wilful Malice or by deliberate Perversity. There is frequently indeed, a specious plausibility, about the so-called arguments of many sophists, that not only disarms suspicion but wins the support of the unthinking multitude; and the importunate, persevering fool, who can but succeed in impressing others with the conviction that his object is laudable, readily achieves an easy victory over the promptings of common sense and the dictates of reason.

More than three centuries have rolled away, since Erasmus wrote his memorable satire, entitled "The Praise of Folly;" and yet so little have mankind advanced in the interval, that most of his sarcasms, are as applicable to the proceedings of the present day as they were when they first issued from his pen. What inexhaustible subjects for his pleasantry, for instance, would have been afforded by the results of the unhappy infatuation that appears to have taken possession, of late years, of no inconsiderable portion of the British Public on the subject of what it is pleased to style EDUCATION!

There is not of course the remotest intention in any of the observations that appear in these pages to cast the slightest aspersion upon real education, properly directed and wisely administered. No language however can be too vehement, no denunciation too forcible, to stigmatize the mischievous agitation commenced and maintained in reality for sinister political purposes; but with the avowed philanthropic object of imparting

—upon a gigantic scale too—a miserable smattering of what is called “elementary knowledge” to one section of the community, though at the cost of another portion, already for the most part, staggering under burdens grievously oppressive, and hard enough to bear.

The Legislature, in the plenitude of its wisdom, thought proper, some few years ago, to decree, that as far as practicable every child, between specified ages should be compelled to attend certain day schools and to be there crammed, morning and evening for a prescribed number of years, with the “elements” of rudimentary knowledge, to be gratuitously or almost gratuitously supplied in unlimited quantity, by mysterious and somewhat tyrannical bodies, scattered in clusters over the length and breadth of the land, vested with autocratic powers and denominated “School Boards.”

When it is considered, that the infants to be dealt with, were to be counted by hundreds of thousands, and that for their accommodation, thousands of school rooms and school buildings had to be compulsorily erected, to be fitted with a variety of scientific appliances and supplied with an army of trained teachers, it was sufficiently obvious, that not only the original, but the permanent and constantly recurring outlay to be provided, must necessarily be enormous, and those who framed the statute seem to have contemplated this, when conferring the power to levy rates literally to an unlimited extent.

For the present purpose it will not be necessary to go beyond the limits of the Metropolitan district, comprising:—

1. The City of London. 2. Chelsea. 3. Finsbury.
4. Greenwich. 5. Hackney. 6. Lambeth. 7. Marylebone.
8. Southwark. 9. Tower Hamlets, and 10. Westminster.

The Board that majestically sways the educational destinies of this populous territory, was called into being, on the 27th November, 1873. Shortly after which, it proceeded to provide itself with:—

A clerk, who receives yearly £1,000	5 inspectors of schools, who
A statistical clerk 445	get between them . . . £1,900
A financial clerk 410	A singing instructor . . . 250
A minuting clerk 345	A drill instructor 160
A school manager 330	A deaf and dumb instructor 300
An industrial school do. . . 265	An examiner of needlework 175
A clerk of the works . . . 265	A kindergarten instructress . 150
An architect 1,000	A store superintendent . . 250
A "sites clerk" 300	Private secretary to chairman 300

Other paid officials in connection with the Central Board, swell the total expenditure under the head of "salaries," &c., to £12,087 5s. 6d., this year it will exceed £18,000!

The receipts and disbursements for the year ending 25th March, 1877, were:—

INCOME.	EXPENDITURE.
Balance in hand	Salaries of the staff £12,087 5 6
25th March, 1876 £86,727 13 2	Cost of enforcing
Grants from Com-	bye-laws 21,409 14 7
mittee of Council	Cost of teachers . 206,782 17 6
on Education . . 68,657 19 7	Books, stationery,
Amounts paid by	&c. 27,019 4 11
rating authorities . 398,867 0 0	Printing, postage, &c. 11,088 19 5
School fees 42,626 8 8	Rent, taxes, in-
Loans raised . . . 449,095 0 0	surance, &c. . . . 17,214 4 9
Temporary loan . . 80,000 0 0	Furniture, fittings,
Miscellaneous in-	cleaning 42,176 16 1
come 6,527 0 0	Fuel and light . . . 8,325 19 6
Contributions from	Purchase of land . 232,798 14 5
H.M. Treasury in	Erection of buildings 364,631 0 2
aid of industrial	Repairs of do. . . 10,320 16 2
schools 550 3 3	Industrial school
	expenses 21,937 8 5
	Interest on loans . 67,661 6 1
	" " current
	account 4,051 3 11
	Legal expenses . . . 5,262 0 3
	On account of per-
	manent offices . . . 847 11 6
	Repayment of tem-
	porary loan . . . 17,218 9 8
	Miscellaneous ex-
	penses 4,391 0 10
	Balance 25th
	March, 1877 . . . 57,826 11 0
Total . . . 1,133,051 4 8	£1,133,051 4 8

It will be seen therefore that the annual expenditure in this one district has already reached the almost incredible amount of £1,075,225 13s. 8d.

The aggregate of the liabilities of the Board up to the 25th March, 1875, including money borrowed on the security of rates for purchase of land, and to meet the liabilities of divisional committees, amounted to £1,583,934, or just £1,531,495 more than the cash at that time in hand!

The Board has however gone on steadily exercising its borrowing powers and augmenting its debts, till, on the 31st October, 1877, they actually amounted to £2,720,580! and yet, on that very day, we find the finance committee urging the Board to borrow £60,000 more, and also to draw £385,000 besides, to meet the current expenses of the year ending March, 1878.

The increasingly oppressive character of the rates is already severely felt in many districts, nor does there appear any immediate probability of the reduction of this most serious infliction. On the contrary, it advances steadily year by year, almost in geometrical progression. The rate of 1872 was nearly double that of 1871, the rate of 1874 doubled in amount that of 1872, that of 1875 was more than three times and for 1876, more than five times, as much as that of 1872. The following tabular statement exhibits this astounding fact at a glance:—

Annual Rate imposed in the Metropolitan District ONLY.

	£	s.	d.			
The amount in 1871 was	40,000	0	0	or, at the rate of about	$\frac{1}{2}d.$	in £
1872 "	75,000	0	0	" "	1d.	"
1873 "	62,000	0	0	" "	$\frac{3}{4}d.$	"
1874 "	149,807	14	0	" "	$1\frac{3}{4}d.$	"
1875 "	263,713	0	0	" "	3d.	"
1876 "	398,867	0	0	" "	$4\frac{1}{2}d.$	"
1877 "	453,970	0	0	" "	$5\frac{1}{4}d.$	"
	<u>£1,443,357</u>	14	0			

As a large amount of the money raised, is required to meet

annual expenditure, it will obviously be a permanent charge, and there is little doubt that ere long, the rate will silently and steadily have advanced to a shilling in the pound, if not much more.

It is satisfactory to find, that an attempt at least is being made, on the part of the representatives of some of the more important districts, to oppose the hitherto unchecked and reckless expenditure of the London Board.

On the 26th October, 1877, at the Marylebone Vestry, a resolution was read from the Vestry of St. James's, Westminster, relative to a statement made by the Chairman of the School Board for London, on the 26th ult., that there will still remain eighty-two schools to be finished or built for the accommodation of 72,000 pupils, to complete the number of schools required to carry out the Act of 1870; that taking the cost of the schools at an estimate of nearly £15 per pupil, over one million sterling more will be required; and inviting the attendance of delegates from the various Metropolitan Vestries and District Boards to confer thereon. Mr. Stevens, in moving that the letter be acknowledged, observed that no persons who had watched the conduct of the London School Board could shut their eyes to the fact that it was *a most extravagant body*, and schools could be pointed out in all directions where they were not wanted. He did not see, however, how sending delegates to Westminster would remedy the evil. Mr. Foxell seconded the motion, and said they had been assured by Mr. Forster and others, that the rates were never to exceed 3d. in the pound, yet they were now paying 5½d. in the pound. This new proposal would increase the rates 2½d., or 7½d., (nearly 8d. in the pound), and it was said before long they would be 1s. An amendment to appoint delegates was carried by a majority of 31 to 6.

On the 8th January, 1878, an important meeting of delegates convened from the different London vestries, was held at

the St. James's Vestry Hall, Westminster, to determine on joint measures to be taken with reference to the action of the London School Board. The meeting had been called by a circular enclosing the following resolution, agreed to by the Vestry of St. James's, Westminster :—"That in accordance with the statement made by the Chairman of the School Board for London at the first meeting of the Board after the recess, there still remain 82 schools to be finished or built, for the accommodation of 72,000 pupils, to complete the number of schools required to carry out the Act of 1870, and taking the cost of those schools at an estimate of nearly £15 per pupil, for land, buildings, fittings, &c., over one million more will be required. That as the above-named 82 schools form one-third of the entire number required—viz., 246—it is only fair to assume that the cost of these 82 schools for working expenses will require a rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ of a penny, which, together with the present rate of $5\frac{1}{4}$ d., will make the rate required for the future $7\frac{1}{8}$ of a penny in the pound. That with this fact before them the Vestry consider it most inexpedient for the School Board for London to extend their operations by way of superior education or otherwise, until the machinery required to carry out the Act of 1870 shall be fully completed, when a just estimate can be formed of the money that will be required by the Board. That it is very desirable that some joint action on the part of the various rating authorities should be taken to enforce this principle being acted upon." Mr. R. Hovenden moved, "That the great and rapid increase of the Education rate in London affords ground for grave apprehension, and calls for a rigid inquiry into the policy and procedure of the Board." He declared that the London School Board had gone beyond what was desired by Parliament and expected by the public, in what it had done up to the present time. Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. Mr. Patchett, of St. Marylebone, declared that the "policy of the School Board" was to increase

the rates, and he urged that the vestries should use their powers to the utmost to check the Board. Mr. G. C. Whiteley, of Camberwell, observed that he attended on the part of some of the members of Camberwell Vestry to state on their behalf, as well as on his own, entire disapproval of this meeting and its purpose. The resolution was then put, and was carried with one dissentient. The Rev. I. E. Kempe then moved, "That in accordance with the original intention of the Act of 1870, the first and paramount aim and effort of the Board should be to gather into their schools those children who are 'running the streets' and attending no school whatever." This resolution was also carried with only one solitary dissentient.

It may be well to call attention to the fact, appearing in a return published in July last, that up to Midsummer, 1875, there had been expended throughout the country on elementary education in five years:—

Imperial grants	£2,228,470
Locally raised	3,060,566
Voluntary subscriptions	1,198,098
Endowments	118,545
Rates	846,065

£7,451,744

The percentage of the total expenditure locally raised was 57·87. In the single year (1876) the sum expended by the 1,790 different School Boards, established in England and Wales, was £2,748,356. The school rates, in 1876 were £814,734 in England and £53,584 in Wales.

During the first two years of the Education Craze, a parliamentary return (printed 23rd April, 1873) showed that even then, the cost of first elections of "the noble and learned" individuals (as they have been styled by an admirer) constituting the different Boards, was in round numbers . £25,000

Cost of elections to fill vacancies	3,800
Cost of clerks, easy chairs for officials, sealing-wax, red tape, and Turkey carpets	64,000
Part of cost of building schools	124,700

Cost of maintenance of schools		£57,400
Fees to denominational schools		5,500
"OTHER EXPENSES," whatever that vague term may include	.	62,600
		<u>£125,500</u>

Barely one-sixth of this vast sum has been disbursed on actual education, while Voluntary Schools are educating upwards of 2,000,000 of children without any help from local rates, and even where School Boards use these schools, the charge per child on the poor-rate is less than 9s. per head!

The Public in return for these enforced exactions, is periodically edified by the self-laudatory gratulations of philanthropic and well-meaning individuals, but with apparently inconsiderable mental endowments, who complacently indulge in oratorical displays, interspersed with much statistical information, to the effect, for instance:—"that the average attendance of children in so-called efficient elementary schools in 1871 was 175,000, whereas at Midsummer last, it was 306,000"!—a statement sure to elicit thunders of applause!

At a recent assemblage of this kind of sapient personages, a resolution was carried with acclamation to the effect:—

"That this meeting feels that the London School Board, by the spirited and energetic manner in which, at the cost of great personal sacrifice and labour on the part of its members, it has carried out the work of primary education entrusted to it, under the Act of 1870, by providing thoroughly efficient schools for 182,000 children, has entitled itself to the hearty gratitude and support of all classes of the community."

No one present it would seem, had sufficient sense of fairness to propose, the substitution for the words, "great personal sacrifice and labour on the part of the members of the Board"—"heavy and rapidly increasing pecuniary sacrifice on the part of the victimized ratepayers."

In all probability however, the grateful meeting did not comprise many of the class who had to provide out of their hard earnings, the wherewithal, for the lavish and wasteful

expenditure above adverted to. Nor does any mention seem to have been made of the fact that the "self-sacrificing and laborious Board" meet hebdomadally at a noble mansion that cost, it is said, over £30,000; adjoining, and rivalling in external beauty, that matchless achievement of modern architecture, the Middle Temple Library! The Board moreover, with the characteristic munificence of true Liberals, when dealing with the money of other people, luxuriously provided their room of meeting, not only with a profusion of furniture and fittings of every kind, but with a magnificent Turkey carpet, for which they had no hesitation in voting at one of their earliest sittings, the prodigious sum of three hundred pounds!

For a long time past, a bitter controversy has been going on between the advocates and the opponents of a scheme, stigmatized by many as "the most stupendous job," by others as "the most gigantic and costly blunder, ever perpetrated by the Legislature." Until quite recently, whatever may have been the convictions of thoughtful men, there were scarcely any sufficient data extant, wherefrom incontrovertible deductions could have been satisfactorily drawn.

It happened, however, not long since, that two scholarships of £30 a year each, presented by two City companies; were offered for open competition to the boys of the Board Schools, as well as of the Voluntary Schools in the Metropolitan district.

One hundred and thirty-three candidates, all under the age of thirteen, appeared in due course, comprising the picked pupils of as many "efficient elementary" schools. The lads had all attended their respective places of instruction, regularly for the stipulated period of three years, and let it be borne in mind, moreover, that they were carefully and judiciously selected for their superior intelligence and proficiency. The subjects were simply rudimentary arithmetic, English history, grammar and geography, 100 marks in each subject being the

most that could be obtained, and the examination was conducted by the experienced head master of King's College School, assisted by Mr. W. A. Thomas. The result is as remarkable as it is eminently important.

One boy failed to obtain *any* marks whatever, in any one subject! 6 failed to obtain marks in 3 subjects, 13 failed in 2 subjects, and 47 failed altogether in one paper. The writing was with few exceptions fairly well done, while much originality appeared in the spelling. In arithmetic, some fair papers were sent in, but in the history examination there were many total failures.

Some of the answers given in the Report were, the examiners thought, melancholy examples of ignorance.

Jack Cade was described to have been "a great Indian conqueror." Sir Christopher Wren was by some, termed "a discoverer," by others an "animal painter." Mr. Gladstone—the (the M.P. for Greenwich)—was regarded as a "great African traveller." The Battle of Cressy was confidently affirmed to have been fought "in the reign of George III., between the Britons and the Romans." Shakespeare's greatest work was said to be "The Wide Wide World"! and so forth.

The result was the complete discomfiture of all the School Board candidates; one scholarship having been awarded to G. H. Perry, educated at St. Paul's Voluntary School, Bow Common; and the other to C. A. Pond, of Christ Church, also a pupil of a Voluntary School!

One can hardly resist the temptation of asking, in what possible way, could the future career of these gutter-children have been benefited, had they all answered correctly the questions submitted to them? Is it probable that an urchin of 12, would make a more skilful crossing-sweeper, a more brilliant shoeblack, or a more expert errand-boy, for knowing that Jack Cade was a ruffianly Irishman, who murdered Sir Humphrey Stafford, Lord Saye and others; that Wren was an architect

of celebrity or Gladstone, a somewhat egotistical demagogue, afflicted with the infelicitous capacity of talking for consecutive hours upon subjects of which often he has but a mere superficial knowledge, leaving his hearers as obfuscated at the end of his harangue as he was himself at the beginning?

What inference, however, could any rational being draw from the selection by a ragged street-boy of the "greatest of Shakespeare's works"! The poor lad's highest literary effort having been probably confined to painfully spelling out letter by letter, the tragedies in the "Police News Sheet," or the still more questionable contents of trashy journals, printed with bad type on paper almost as execrable as the grammar and orthography. It would be difficult to find unanimity of opinion, on the above topic in a dozen of well-read Shakespearean scholars, to say nothing of that august body "the Metropolitan School Board," and even with the aid of their august, and no doubt highly cultivated and erudite thousand-pounder clerk.

Now the few facts here cited, prove unanswerably that the whole system is utterly defective. To suppose that any human being—beyond the little junto of highly-paid and comfortably-housed officials—derives advantage, even to the smallest extent, from the cumbrous and costly machinery that has lately been set in motion, is simply an absurdity.

Still more flagrantly absurd, is the length of time during which it is proposed to keep within the grip of the Board, the unfortunate urchins for whose "benefit" all this operose and costly machinery has been called into existence. If—as it was avowed in the first instance—the sole intention of the Legislature—for some undefined and undefinable object—was to instruct our street Arabs in reading, writing, and arithmetic, there could be no need to hold them in bondage for some six long and dreary years! Time, most of it, irreparably wasted, when it is borne in mind that after this hypothetical education

is finished, the work of real instruction has to be begun, if any opening, should be offered them.

As Mr. Boyle, one of H.M.'s inspectors of schools, very sensibly and most truly remarks, "Children who receive certificates under Labour Acts, will in all probability never touch a book again after leaving school." It is simply, therefore, sheer folly, with such a probability in view, to waste the best years of a child's life in acquiring, very imperfectly at best, an art he is more than likely to forget all about, in less time than it took him to pick it up! Privy Councillor Borneman, of the Education Department, Dresden, affirms that in the schools of Saxony, a child of ordinary intelligence, say eight years old, with two or three hours' daily instruction, learns to read, write, and do the four rules of simple arithmetic in one year. At the end of the second school year the child is usually able to read fluently, and with a fair apprehension of its meaning, any printed page, whether in German or Roman characters. Dr. Schuster, Director of the Real-Schule, first order, Hanover, says that children between six and seven years old, learn to read and write well on receiving one hour's daily instruction for six months. In the elementary schools they take nine months. Dr. Otto, of Heidelberg, states that infants of six or six and a half, after the first year's schooling, have learnt to read easy sentences in the primer and to write distinctly and correctly. Children of six, says Dr. Seeson, of Hamburg, in one year, learn readily to read without difficulty both German and Latin characters: after three years they are perfect in orthography. Dr. Meyerberg, Inspector of Schools in Stockholm, gives the details of an interesting experiment tried at a parish school, where, on the 15th August, 1877, fifty boys and fifty girls were admitted, and divided into three classes, each class having a separate room and a separate teacher. On the 20th August their instruction began, they being then wholly ignorant of reading, writing, or, indeed, of anything. By the first week in

October—that is, in about seven weeks—it was ascertained on examination that the whole of the thirty children in one class, without one exception, could read slowly easy passages, not before practised or read, both in print and in writing. In writing, the progress was more varied. The best pupils could copy very neatly upon slates from a black board. In arithmetic they could employ the numbers 1 to 10 in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They had also learnt some Bible history from *vivâ voce* instruction. We gather, therefore, that in about seven weeks, children acquire the slow reading of ordinary Swedish words. It is found that they can attain to perfect mechanical reading in about as many months. Why, then, should English children be deemed so stolid, as to need ten times the teaching that foreign children require?

With the palpable evidence before us, that out of the whole seething mass of pupils, who have for three long years been simmering in the Board School cauldrons, and with every precaution and care taken in their selection, not one solitary unit has been producible, capable of holding his own in fair competition with the scholars of the old Voluntary Schools, it would be ludicrous, were it not lamentable, to hear the blatant babble of Noodledom exultingly chuckling over the triumphs achieved by “the *gallant* (!) London School Board, which is not only teaching our children, but is teaching religion to the clergy of England” (!), and then comes the oft-repeated cuckoo cry—“The school rates scarcely amount to one-fifth of the poor rates, and will they not save us poor rates and prison rates in the present and the future?”

No oppressed or victimized ratepayer can venture to call attention to the fact, that the Metropolitan Board has already accumulated an ever-increasing debt of nearly three millions, with an annual expenditure of £400,000, hinting that in all probability it will have to be met next year by a 6d., and the year after by a 1s., and probably ere long by a 2s. rate; but

up starts Noodle, in stentorian accents exclaiming, "Economy—away with it, where Education is concerned—educate, educate the people, sir—and you will annihilate crime—establish schools, sir!—schools in every parish, and you may dispense with gaols." Assembled Noodledom always responds to this hackneyed absurdity with—"vehement and continued applause." Thus encouraged, the Orator brings out the stereotyped fallacy, "Yes, sir! statistics prove, by an inexorable logic, that ignorance is the most prolific source of crime." (Loud cheers.) This magniloquent nonsense has been so constantly and so loudly reiterated on all occasions, that it has got at last to be received as an indisputable syllogism. All that the "inexorable logic of statistics" *does* however really show, is; that the majority of criminals are ignorant—nothing more! Those who constitute a large portion of the vicious classes; are unlettered, because they have neither application nor industry, nor any desire for book knowledge. Give them three years' gratuitous schooling, and as they are, for the most part naturally sharp-witted; in proportion to the cultivation they receive, they will to a certainty become, far more rapacious and formidable, though possibly, less ferocious, beasts of prey.

But let us for a moment accept the challenge, and see what the "inexorable logic of statistics" does actually prove. Here is, by chance, the "special report of the visiting justices," embodying the statistics of the House of Correction, Cold-bath Fields, for the five years preceding Michaelmas, 1877. It was issued 23rd Feb. 1878, and for the present purpose of course, the records of any one prison, selected at hazard, are just as good in all respects, as if we were to compile those of fifty or a hundred prisons. Well, here is what we find as regards the summary committals of prisoners wholly uneducated. In 1873-74, there were 2,360; in 1874-75, 2,182; in 1875-76, 2,186; and in 1876-77, 2,024—total for the four years, 8,752. Of those who had received education,

and all of whom could either read, or read and write, more or less imperfectly, the numbers were in the same years 7,189;—6,589;—7,635;—and 9,269—total for the four years, 30,682. Now let us take the summary committals of those who could “read and write and well,” and some of whom had received “a superior education.” In the same four years these amounted to 418;—1,303;—889;—and 452—total, 3,062. So that the “inexorable logic of statistics” completely turns the tables upon the oratorical quidnuncs who are so emphatically vehement in their endeavours to uphold, *per fas et nefas*, the system they advocate. The relative proportions in any number of gaols would no doubt be found to differ very slightly, if at all, from those above quoted. Here, happens to be, a copy of the calendar of the 68 prisoners for trial at the Middlesex March Sessions, 1878. Out of the 68, fifty-five are more or less educated, while only thirteen have had no schooling. The educated prisoners standing to the uneducated, in the proportion of 5 to 1! There can be but one inference, then, drawn from the indisputable fact, that in four years, the committals of wholly uneducated and ignorant prisoners, amounted to 8,752, while of those who had received the “priceless boon” of education, including those who read and wrote well, and others who did so “superiorly,” there were in the same period no less than *thirty-three thousand, six hundred, and forty-four!* In other words, the more or less educated criminals, bore to the wholly ignorant, the proportion of nearly 4 to 1.

The Board School advocate may, however, possibly reply:—“Oh! but these are all trivial offences, and most of them, juvenile criminals, the proportions will be found reversed, if you take the graver charges.” Let us see whether even a scintilla of truth lurks in this fresh assumption. Still confining our researches to the same 4 years, 1873—77; we find, that of the wholly uneducated prisoners, tried at the sessions, there

were only 576 ; while of those—all more or less educated, and including 47 of “superior education”—the total was 4,105 ! Here, therefore, the facts demonstrate, that with the increased gravity of the offence, the ratio actually increases, and the educated criminals stand to the utterly ignorant (numerically, of course, a vastly larger class) in the proportion literally of more than seven to one ! The upholder of the Board system, is wont at every opportunity to proclaim, *ad nauseam*, “If we had but more schools, we should have no need of prisons ! Every year since the education of the people, has been going on in earnest, there has been a steady decrease in the number of the prisoners committed for trial—our noble schools are rapidly emptying the gaols.” On reference to the figures above quoted, it will be evident that in the particular prison above alluded to, the diminution observable, is rather in favour of the “wholly illiterate ;” the well and indifferently educated, committed summarily, as well as those sent for subsequent trial, amounted in the above years respectively, to 8,523 ;—8,954 ; 9,567 ; and 10,805 ! These figures need no comment.

Sufficient has been said to show the utter fallacy of all the pompous assertions continually put forward on this subject. A cause must indeed be rotten that has to be bolstered up by such delusive fallacies.

At the opening of a new Board School near Blackfriars-road in January last, Sir Charles Reed improved the occasion, by adverting unctuously to the decrease of juvenile crime in 1876 as contrasted with 1869. He quoted statistics to show that whereas in 1869 there were, in the Surrey County gaol, just 500 offenders between the ages of 9 and 15, in 1876 there were only 167, a statement of course received with much applause ! “Could anything prove more conclusively the transcendent importance of Board Schools ?—their moral results were beyond calculation,” &c., &c. But it never seemed to have occurred, however, either to the speaker or to

his anserine audience, that these grand statistics only proved that many lads from 9 to 15 were for awhile prevented, by compulsory attendance at school, from following the bent of their natural predatory tendencies! The flimsy fallacy is demolished by the established and incontrovertible fact, that crime has been greatly on the increase of late years all over the kingdom, though for reasons stated elsewhere, prosecutions and convictions may have diminished. Then, again, the crimes committed by educated criminals are far more detrimental and ruinous in their consequences than the petty larcenies of half-starved and ignorant pilferers.

The rogue who originally contented himself with filching watches, snuff-boxes, or purses, when once educated, addicts himself to penning plausible prospectuses, or he takes to acting as a decoy duck in the capacity of director—promoting bubble companies. He now keeps his carriage, lives in luxury, and fleeces the public out of tens of thousands, and that too, in most cases, with perfect impunity. Like the model transatlantic “man of business,” he knows enough of thieving to take care that no one shall rob him, and he has just sufficient knowledge of law, to shield himself from prosecution. When caught, the punishment inflicted, is generally less severe, than the sentence on a much less heinous criminal, so that it is far better worth the while of the educated rogue to play the higher game.

We shall assuredly have to wait many weary years for the universal suppression of mendicity and crime, by the simple process of sending little boys to day schools, impressing upon them the important fact that Jack Cade was an Oriental Potentate, that Shakespeare’s greatest production was the “Wide, Wide World,” and that Turkey is the county town of Norfolk!

But in addition to the inculcation of these sublime truths, supposing the education conferred, to be really and practically

useful, it is obvious that the more nearly universally the "priceless boon" is distributed, the less is its value to a particular individual.

It may be a salutary, as it doubtless is a grandly "liberal" doctrine, that every human being should have gratuitously provided for him the means of self-culture, of knowledge and virtue, and all appliances for promoting his health and comfort, but why stop short, after three years' attempted indoctrination in spelling and ciphering, contemptible though his progress meanwhile may have been? Why should not the income-tax be increased to enable us to provide every present pauper with a commodious residence and a handsome competence?

No;—our political economists persist in ignoring one important fact, and that is, that whatever is gratuitously bestowed soon ceases to be valued at all, or else it is speedily claimed as a right, and usually becomes worthless to the very individuals who would have prized it at its real worth, had they earned it by their own industry. This truth was singularly exemplified lately by the operations of a French company at Decaze, which provided dwellings for its servants at less than the actual cost.

In twenty years after the commencement of the experiment only eight houses remained in the hands of the workmen. All the rest had been sold, and a good many converted into wine-shops. Scarcely any of the original owners had been able to resist the temptation of selling their tenements at a profit. The same result would indubitably occur here, by the operation of the same process.

It would of course be impossible for children, educated gratuitously, to dispose on any terms of the "education" that has been doled out to them, for besides its non-transferability it is as nearly worthless as anything of the kind can be. But whether houses or education, or bread or breeches or beer be

given to any class at less than cost price, the operation is tantamount to giving them what they have not earned or are not entitled to. It demoralizes them and lowers them in their own estimation. It might be a different matter, if the Nation had suddenly found itself possessed of untold millions, it knew not what to do with, but as matters stand, the millions have to be wrung from the hardworking and the industrious, myriads of whom are scarcely removed in position above those, whose children they are made to teach and compelled to bring into competition with their own.

In the apt words of a writer, in the *Journal of Science* (Jan., 1876), where educated men are few, they can name their own terms, and attain a comfortable position. No more deplorable state is there on the other hand, than that of those who have received a really good education, but are at the same time ignorant of any special business, profession or manufacture. Compulsory education, by increasing the number of this class, only makes the competition more frantic. It is a great blunder to suppose that ignorance is the only, or even the main, cause of pauperism. Numbers who cannot sign their names, or speak accurately, amass millions, while thousands who have attained high and general culture and are men of great and original thought, can scarcely earn a pittance. There is hardly an instance of a discoverer or of an inventor, who has enlarged the boundaries of human knowledge, having accumulated a fortune.

Not long ago, the chaplain of one of the largest metropolitan prisons—as good an authority as could well be cited—in one of his periodical reports upon the flock of black sheep entrusted to him, put forth the bold opinion that, “if we expect by means of the schoolmaster to diminish our criminal population, we shall find ourselves grievously mistaken.” Speaking from personal experience and observation, and much study of the subject, the melancholy conclusion to which the reverend

gentleman in question is driven is, that to insist on the children, of what is known as the dangerous class, being sent to school and drilled up to the required educational standard will have no better result in the future, than to insure their being smooth rogues instead of rough ones. He believes that putting them through the School Board furnace, may improve them exteriorly, but that the base metal of their natures will remain unchanged; and that as regards criminals to the manner born—and there are, in seems, at least three of these to one of any other sort—mental culture will but assist them in developing such an amount of cunning and cleverness as may be found necessary to enable them to keep pace with the times, and provide for the maintenance of the balance of power between themselves and the improved policeman.

An able and intelligent writer has well observed “that the fallacious bait of reduced rates for prisons and the like, is a bait for dull or wrong-headed people only; and will in another fifty years be reckoned among the monstrous and unaccountable delusions of the present time.”

Lord Palmerston used to tell an amusing incident, tending strikingly to prove, that education, even of the best and highest order, is not by any means conducive to competence. Three shepherds, in tattered habiliments and miserable plight, in the employ of a wealthy Australian landowner, had taken refuge from a storm in a cave on a hill side. On comparing notes, it was found that one had been a high wrangler at Cambridge, another had attained a first-class and had been tutor of his college at Oxford, and the third had held a professorship of philosophy at Heidelberg! The man in whose service they were all then engaged, was a transported highwayman who had served his time and had subsequently accumulated a large fortune, but could neither read nor write!

Every competent person, however, who has ever considered the subject and whose opinion is worth listening to, emphati-

cally denies the correctness of the alleged inferences imputing the prevalence of crime to ignorance. It may, on the contrary, be asserted with truth, that any system of universal and compulsory education, must of necessity be based upon erroneous assumptions, if it be founded on the belief that crime is inseparable from ignorance.

It is the oft-reiterated boast of Americans that the whole mass of the people is educated, and yet in all probability, no city in the world, teems with a greater number of rogues, scoundrels, thieves and swindlers—in proportion to its population—than the highly-civilised and much-lauded city of New York,

“Yet :—the Education we want,” says a writer in a Boston paper, “is one that shall inculcate clearly not only the ‘exceeding sinfulness of sin,’ but the exceeding rascality of lying and stealing—an Education that shall banish small measures from the counter, small baskets from the stall, pebbles from the cotton-bags, clay from the paper, sand from sugar, chicory from coffee, alum from bread, and water from the milk-cans. The Education or the religion that is to save the world, will not put all the big strawberries at the top and all little ones at the bottom. It will not make one half pair of shoes of good leather and the other half of poor leather, so that the first shall redound to the maker’s credit and the second to his cash. It will not put Jouvin’s stamp on Jenkins’ kid gloves, nor make Paris bonnets in the back room of a Boston milliner’s shop; nor let a piece of velvet that professes to measure twelve yards come to an untimely end in the tenth, or a spool of sewing-silk that vouches for twenty yards be nipped in the bud at fourteen and a half; nor all-wool delaines and all-linen handkerchiefs be amalgamated with clandestine cotton; nor coats made of old rags, pressed together, be sold to the unsuspecting public for legal broadcloth. It does not put bricks at five dollars per thousand into chimneys it contracts to build of

seven-dollar material ; nor smuggle white pine into floors that have paid for hard pine ; nor leave yawning cracks in closets where boards ought to join ; nor daub the ceilings that ought to be smoothly plastered ; nor make window-blinds with slats that cannot stand the wind, and paint that cannot stand the sun, and fastenings that may be looked at, but are on no account to be touched. The religion that is going to sanctify the world, pays its debts. It does not consider that 40 cents returned for 100 cents given, is according to the Gospel, though it may be according to law. It looks on a man who has failed in trade, and who continues to live in luxury, as a thief."

If we admit the correctness of the adage:—"fortes creantur, fortibus et bonis"—the converse, must necessarily be equally true, and we need not look far for its confirmation on a somewhat extensive scale. The country, whither for many years we deported our felons—the country whither for more than half a century, flocked all the escaped convicts, fraudulent attorneys, forgers, red republicans, highwaymen and assassins—the country, in short, that for long years welcomed with open arms, the dregs and refuse of the civilized world, engendered in due course a motley population, remarkable chiefly for its "liberal" tendencies, manifested, by inordinate rapacity no less than by an inordinate laxity of moral principle. Yet almost from the first, there was in that happy land no dearth of education—such as it was—everybody had the opportunity of learning to read and write ; into every transatlantic youth was inculcated an abhorrence of every form of government but the one under which he had the happiness to live, and either directly or indirectly he learnt, that to annex or to appropriate on a grand scale was meritorious ; to acquire under false pretences the hard-earned property of others and then to confiscate it, was an act to be applauded. Not by individuals only, but by whole "States,"—populous communities—was this creed

greedily adopted, and Europe beheld with amazement not only the sleek and broad-brimmed denizens of Pennsylvania, but the well-schooled rogues inhabiting the surrounding States, all eagerly and unblushingly adopting the vile doctrine of "repudiation" and flaunting the broad banner of rascaldom.

The contempt, humiliation and obloquy to which all Americans were exposed by the gigantic frauds of the defaulting States, were insufficient to induce an effort to extricate themselves from the black slough wherein they wallowed or to induce them to return to the paths of honesty.

Of what practical value, then, is the empty boast, that in America, every individual is either educated or has the means of education gratuitously offered him—of what avail is it, that unprincipled orators should incessantly brag about the superiority above all others of a Government that is impotent alike to check an unprecedented series of crimes or to bring the delinquents to the bar of justice? Who can feel surprised that the "liberal" doctrine of confiscation, should have branded with infamy the very name of the form of government under which so vile a series of acts of spoliation could be perpetrated without remonstrance, without punishment, and without redress?

If it be asked, why the doctrines and conduct in question, have caused amongst all right-minded and thoughtful men a deep-rooted abhorrence of democratic government in general, or what has been termed, a morbid hatred of America,—the best answer is given in the words of Sydney Smith:—"The morbid hatred of America, as you term it—has arisen because her conduct has been predatory—because she has ruined so many helpless children,—so many miserable women, so many aged men—because she has disturbed the order of the world and rifled those sacred treasures which human virtue had hoarded to alleviate human misery. Why is such hatred morbid? Why is it not just, inevitable, innate? Why is it not disgraceful to want it? Why is it not honourable to feel it?"

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"If," added he, "the Americans have improved upon the institutions of the Old World, they have at least equalled its crimes. A great nation, after trampling under foot all earthly tyranny, has been guilty of a fraud as enormous as ever disgraced the worst king of the most degraded nation of Europe. American citizens excite wherever they may go, the recollection that they belong to a dishonest people, who pride themselves on having tricked and pillaged Europe."

"Little did the friends of America expect it, and sad is the spectacle, to see you rejected by every State in Europe, as a nation with whom no contract can be made, because none will be kept; unstable in the very foundations of social life, deficient in the elements of good faith, men who prefer any load of infamy, however great, to any pressure of taxation however light."

"No conduct was ever more profligate than that of the State of Pennsylvania. History cannot pattern it: and let no deluded being imagine, that they will ever repay a single farthing—their people have tasted of the dangerous luxury of dishonesty, and they will never be brought back to the homely rule of right."

"Figure to yourself a Pennsylvanian, receiving foreigners in his own country, walking over the public works with them and showing them Larcenous Lake, Swindling Swamp, Crafty Canal, Rogue's Railway and other dishonest works. 'This swamp we gained' (says the patriotic borrower) 'by the repudiated loan of 1828. Our great Canal robbery was in 1830; we pocketed your good people's money for this railroad, last year.'"

"All this may seem very smart to the Americans, but if I had had the misfortune to be born among such a people, the land of my fathers should not retain me a single moment after the act of repudiation. I would appeal from my fathers to my forefathers. I would fly to Newgate for greater purity of

thought, and seek in the prisons of England for better rules of life."

Nearly half a century has passed away since then ; and yet notwithstanding the reiterated boast that America is forty years ahead of Europe in the matter of education ; roguery, rascality and corruption avowedly pervade all classes, and fraud, embezzlement and conspiracies more or less dishonest, are rife in every institution, in all public offices, in all municipal corporations, while many of the principal railway companies and other similar associations, have long been little better than organized swindles. In that happy country, with education universal ; magistrates, judges, juries and governors of States invariably incline to leniency, and thus it is, that the most atrocious criminals are constantly liberated, after having, for a few weeks, awaited in durance, "the tedious formality of an acquittal."

In this highly-educated community, with its rampant liberalism, the murder rate throughout the States is admitted to be *five* daily ! Yet a New York journal complacently suggested, not long ago, that "a few doses of lamp-post justice offer the only means of staying the hand of the assassin in that city." This too in a nation, whereof it has been said, that in no other country in the world do a million persons, taken not from a horizontal, but from a vertical section of society, read so much. With all their "education" and all their "reading," it is astonishing, that they should not, in less than 80 years have devised anything better in the way of a Constitution, than the absurd agglomeration of anomalies under which their so-called Government proceeds. A Constitution, that every four years throws the whole country into a state of ferment, disorganizes society, sets whole classes into direct antagonism, engenders lasting feuds and bitter conflicts, and winds up by making all civil appointments, from the highest to the lowest, the recognized prizes of a successful faction. With each change in the

Presidency, there inevitably follows a clean sweep of the whole of the Civil Service, from the chief functionary in the Customs to the pettiest village postmaster. How can it be expected that places, won ostensibly as bribes should be held for any other purpose, than the personal advantage of the possessor for the time being?

In a work—published September, 1876—entitled, *A Review of the Progress and Present State of Federal Democracy in the United States*, by a Mr. Macfarland, a distinguished American lawyer, who has had unusual facilities for studying the character of his countrymen, there occurs the following passage:—

“In a democracy the people decide whether public obligations shall be repudiated or honourably discharged. It is for them to decide what voluntary sacrifices they will or they will not make to this end. When we consider that it is not in human nature to inflict upon one's self very severe flagellation from mere devotion to the principles of abstract justice, we are led to doubt whether the safety of the public creditor does not consist rather in ignorance of efficient methods for exercising this power than in any indisposition to do so. . . . No democracy has thus far exhibited either a very delicate sense of honour touching financial obligations or a fervent zeal in their discharge. The idea, and for that matter the practice, of repudiation is not unfamiliar to us. States and municipalities have not hesitated to repudiate their obligations under some pretext or other whenever they became burdensome. It will be found necessary, sooner or later, in order to prevent general confiscation, to give property a vote, in all cases involving large municipal expenditure. It would seem as though there ought to be some such weapon for self-preservation placed by society in the hands of property.”

What is this, but a cool admission that an “educated” democracy is necessarily and avowedly a nation of sharpers, with whom all dealings ought to be shunned? That, in this highly “educated” community, there is little probability that rascality is on the decrease, may be pretty safely inferred from the annual circular, issued last January by the New York house of Messrs. R. G. Dun and Co., showing the number of failures which have occurred in the United States during the five years 1873—1877 inclusive.

It is shown from the tables here given, that out of a total

of 652,006 traders, there have been, in the above five years, no less than 36,717 failures—viz., in 1873, 5,183; in 1874, 5,830; in 1875, 7,740; in 1876, 9,092; and in 1877, 8,872, averaging 7,343 a year! showing moreover a steady annual increase in the number of bankrupts, while a further perusal of Messrs. Dun's pamphlet, proves that the steadily-diminishing assets, yielded by the estates of insolvent firms, affords strong presumptive evidence, that the "advanced liberality" which has dissipated in so wholesale a way, the property of its dupes, has not been wholly without a purpose.

In this happy model democracy, with its "highly-educated" community, the cash amount of the failures, for the two years 1876 and 1877, is stated at 381,786,000 dollars! Messrs. Dun remark that—

"More serious still is it that mercantile morality, already sufficiently at fault, is still on a downward grade, as exemplified by the events of each day. This tendency is nowhere more plainly seen than in the failures that occur with the *deliberate purpose of making money by compromising indebtedness at as much less than its full amount as can be accomplished.* The evils that flow from an encouragement of this policy are fraught with consequences the most destructive of sound trade or future safety. In every community where an operation of this kind is successful, the honest, thrifty, and capable merchant is placed at a tremendous disadvantage. He may well despair of success in competition with those whose incapacity, lack of capital, or want of honesty, has enabled them to get their assets at a fraction of their value, and who can, therefore, afford to undersell all others not so fortunate. The influence of the proposal, that Congress should inaugurate a policy of a similar character, and compromise the indebtedness of the country by paying it in silver instead of gold, is already seen in the debased public sentiment that prevails as to the payment of private indebtedness in full. An example of this character, in quarters so high, cannot fail of an effect most potent in the worst direction, for it is idle to suppose that the public faith can be impaired without a corresponding result among the vast class who are honest only from policy."

The gigantic system of frauds, successively discovered of late, in every department, together with the "Rings" and "Corners," only prove too conclusively that to share the organized plunder of the public, is the great end, aim and object of every zealous "patriot," be he red republican or democrat, petty swindler, or wholesale robber. Such is the

known and admitted knavery of the whole worthless class of agitators, that men of character and respectability keep altogether aloof from politics. Rogues and unprincipled vagabonds accordingly carry all before them, and enrich themselves at the expense of the unfortunate community, who are periodically distracted by the incessant efforts of one faction or another, to attain the power and the privilege of bleeding them.

The urgency of the evil is admitted, and yet this highly-“educated,” and exemplary “reading” nation, can devise no more effectual way of lessening the corruption that pollutes and drains it, than the paltry expedient of dismissing 20 per cent. of the Government clerks at New York, and making those who are retained, work an hour a day longer than they did before!

It surely cannot be pretended that universal education has produced an orderly or a law-abiding population. The organized strike in July, 1877, of the servants of the different railway companies, whereby the entire traffic of the Union was paralyzed, and property to the amount of nearly 12 millions sterling, utterly destroyed in a few days, demonstrates that these “highly-educated” and intelligent workmen, are in no respects better than the most illiterate and ignorant Irishry, or the “liberal” but destructive Communists who in a few weeks, demolished in Paris, property to the amount of 27 millions sterling. A so-called high-class “education,” that admits on the part of the recipient, of a belief that he can by any possibility benefit either himself or his class by “a strike,” or that he can enforce his views upon others by a systematic destruction of the very machinery, without which he becomes himself a starving pauper—is simply calculated to excite the contempt and derision of all men with the feeblest pretension to common sense.

That contempt and derision is moreover enhanced, when we read that the brave, intelligent, and “highly-educated” militia-

men, when called out to protect the property and the lives of their fellow-citizens, and their property from an infuriated crowd of "drunken 'strikers,' rowdies, and plunderers"—in numerous instances—ignominiously turned tail and allowed the "intelligent" railway stokers and engine-drivers to sack, burn and destroy all before them at their pleasure. On the "glorious" 4th of July, only a few days previously, these "gallant" militiamen could carry themselves as bravely as real soldiers, in all their panoply of uniform and shako, with drums and flaunting banners and tinsel and trumpery. So long as their most arduous duty was confined to burning blank cartridges or crackers, there was no limit to their military ardour. But when for the first time in their lives, they were called out on active service and had a chance of being of some little real use; instead of indignantly repelling the truculent cowards to whom they were opposed, the congenial dastards, like the craven National Guards of Paris, fraternized with the pillagers, who thus freed from all fear of coercion or restraint, continued their career of wanton and unbridled destruction, annihilating in a few hours, works that it will take months, if not years, to restore.

"At Pittsburg, the sheriff was killed, the general in command of the forces badly wounded, and an attempt was made to burn the soldiers to death in the 'Round House,' where they had taken refuge. Here they were bombarded and finally burnt out. Forced to fly, they became disorganized, and were chased by the rioters for several miles with some loss of life. The deliberate destruction of a vast quantity of rolling stock upon the railway, was then accomplished, and 10,000 rioters swarmed through the streets, breaking open shops and seizing arms and ammunition. They were only checked when the citizens formed themselves into vigilance committees to protect their lives and properties. Some 300 killed and wounded were reported among the mob at this one place."

On the 26th of July, 1877, the Anglo-American cable

conveyed the news that "the entire Federal Army and Navy were on duty," engaged in restraining the intelligent and "highly-educated" working classes from plundering and destroying the property of those to whom they were indebted for their daily bread! At Chicago, the same telegram conveyed the cheering news that the intelligent and educated "strikers had to be charged by cavalry and mown down by grape and canister before they could be compelled to desist from their organized pillage of the town."

It is some satisfaction to find that though the militia were the veriest poltroons, the Federal troops displayed the most gallant bravery, and that too in several instances, under trying circumstances, and when they were vastly outnumbered by an infuriated and bloodthirsty mob.

After all, then, it cannot be denied, but that one manifest and undeniable result of the vaunted education of Yankeedom, has been the production of a nation steeped in "broad, blazing, refulgent, meridian fraud!"

The extravagant cost of Government in the United States, the enormous taxation of the whole country and at the same time the niggardly pay allotted to public functionaries, are among the causes of the corruption of the whole body politic. In any of the large American cities, the cost of living is far greater than in any of the capitals of Europe. At Washington or New York, for instance, it would require more than double the income to obtain the same amount of necessaries and luxuries procurable for a given sum in London. "Yet the salaries of cabinet ministers at Washington, each wielding vast power, and dispensing large patronage, are fixed at £1,600 a year." The Commander-in-Chief of the United States army, declared, his inability to live honestly in Washington upon his salary.

The miserable fate of General Belknap, shows, to what humiliating practices a man may have recourse whose means are inadequate to enable him to maintain his position, while at

the same time that he has opportunities of making illicit gains to an extent, practically unlimited.

Scotland again, prides herself on the universality of the Education bestowed on her offspring, and yet "the inexorable logic of facts" proves that habitual drunkenness is more common, and the proportion of illegitimate to legitimate births is far greater in Scotland than in any other country claiming to rank as civilized!

On the 16th June, 1875, a Mr. Macdonald stated in the House of Commons, that "he had lived much in Scotland and had seen more dissipation and more shameless drunkenness in one small village of 1,000 inhabitants (and under a restricted liquor law) than he had seen in all London with a population of four millions"!

Scotland is wont to take great pride in Glasgow, its wealth, its commerce, its University, its intelligence. It is reputed to be the head-quarters of advanced liberalism and of universally-diffused "education." The following, however, is the description given by an unprejudiced spectator, as quoted in the House of Commons on the 29th January last—of a recent gathering of the inhabitants of Glasgow bent upon getting up an anti-Ministerial demonstration. "I have attended," said the writer, "a Magna Charta meeting in London; I have heard the M.P. for Stoke address his constituents; I have even seen a prize fight near Birmingham; at each and all, the company was certainly not select, but it was aristocratic, compared with the Glasgow mob! I never saw a more horrible-looking crowd. A Glasgow mob, is, *par excellence*, the very worst mob in the world. Swearing, in English, is very bad, but in Scotch, it is awful. There was but one respectable man at this meeting; he lived at Rutherglen, and has since been hanged for murder!"

"In a country," says another witness of higher authority still—"where the strangest medley of puritanical hypocrisy,

bigotry, and uncharitableness, mingled with the lowest Jewish superstitions, is accepted, or passes muster for Christianity—a country that yielding from lands and heritages a gross return of £18,698,804 spends *seven millions* in whiskey for home consumption alone; the returns for one year, ending 30th June, 1875, show; that 61,173 persons were arrested for intoxication (38,213 as drunk and incapable and 22,960 as drunk and disorderly”!)

On New Year’s Day last, there were at the various police courts in Glasgow 370 and at Edinburgh 80 prisoners, most of the delinquents charged with being “drunk and incapable,” or “disorderly!” Such is the religious tenacity wherewith the “highly-educated” denizens of those respectable cities cling to saturnalian orgies of a pagan anniversary, while the more important Christian festival of the preceding week is scarcely yet recognised, by the “ministry,” who in that part of the kingdom are supposed to occupy the position and discharge the functions of an orthodox priesthood.

In the year 1875, out of a total of 115,673 children born, no less than 11,266 were illegitimate! In the north-eastern division, the girls who became mothers, without taking upon themselves the duties of wives, were in the proportion of 15·2 per cent. At Kirkcudbright the proportion was 17·3 per cent., and yet in all Europe, it would be difficult to find a more thoroughly priest-ridden locality. All putative religious forms and ceremonies are there so rigidly observed, except marriage, that a man dare not even venture to brush his hat on “the Sabbath.” The improving influence of solid general education in Scotland is indeed sadly diminished, by the irregular increase of the population, and still more by the rapidly-growing number of drunkards. To this cause doubtless is also attributable the great augmentation that has been remarked, of late years, in the number of murder cases in Scotland.

It is idle to imagine for a moment, that the wretched smatter-

ing of knowledge dinned into the heads of gutter children during three or more years' schooling, will have any real effect in improving their morality, unless indeed, remunerative employment can be subsequently provided for them. If that be not done, observation has shown, that these urchins invariably become far more mischievous and pestilent nuisances than they were before, and swell the numbers of crafty criminals. They may be aware that the earth is an oblate spheroid, that its polar diameter is just 23,090 yards shorter than the equatorial; they may even implicitly believe that Gibraltar is the most important town in Russia, and they may stoutly maintain that Moses was slain by his son Absalom, and yet if unable to obtain employment whereby they can support themselves, they may prove more troublesome to the police, than they were even before they received the "priceless boon" of elementary education! No doubt if all the children of pauper parents were gratuitously clothed and fed and provided with pocket money, there might be for a time a considerable diminution of the present number of petty offences, but what can be more shamefully unjust, than that the Legislature should arrogate the right of taking by force, the hard-earned income of A, B, C, D to benefit E, F, G, and H? Why should a man, who is probably already rated at three or four shillings in the pound, besides having his own children to maintain and educate, be fined an additional sixpence or eightpence in the pound, to provide education for street Arabs, as it is the fashion to call them, who will shortly be competing for employment with his own offspring?

Improvident marriages, are the great, if not the most fertile source of a very large proportion of the crime and misery that exist in the world. To provide nutriment, raiment and needful instruction for the resulting progeny is one, among the many considerations, that restrain the prudent, the thoughtful and the wise, from yielding to the impulse or dictates of passion and

from taking an irretrievable step, that too often leads to disaster. Remove this salutary check,—let it once be perceived and acknowledged, that the State takes upon itself, the burden of educating the children of all the paupers in the community, and ere long, the number of these pernicious and reprehensible marriages will most assuredly be found to be vastly on the increase.

This may go on till the “Education rate” becomes so enormous that the patience of the payers will at last revolt, and once fairly roused, they may at length insist upon the repeal of the unjust and odious tax. The suggestion that the Boards elected by the ratepayers are a sufficient check upon the prodigious and costly machinery set in motion by the Act of 1870, is entirely illusory. The Boards, once called into existence, must of necessity comply with the requirements of that unfortunate measure. They have very little choice in the matter, and there is—wonderful to relate—no limit to the amount of the tax the Board may impose—there is nothing to prevent the imposition of a half-crown or of any higher rate should the Board think fit to authorize one to that extent.

The Metropolitan Board, announced on the 27th of February last, its intention of expending during the ensuing financial year, five hundred and six thousand, three hundred and five pounds, much in the same way, that preceding millions have already been resolved into thin air. The above enormous sum, it must be remembered, is over and above the £75,000 this august and doughty body is striving hard to obtain from the Board of Works; neither does it include the £3,000 or £4,000 a year, the value of the mansion on the Embankment; computing the interest on the money irretrievably sunk, and adding thereto insurance, repairs, depreciation, &c. There ought besides, certainly to be placed annually to the debit side, one-third of the extravagant sum triennially wasted on the elections, that is to say, between £8,000 and £9,000. It

cannot be too frequently reiterated, therefore, that the "liberal" establishment on the Embankment, spends upon itself, its *employés*, &c., little short of £30,000 a year! Every remonstrance on behalf of the ratepayers, is met with such illusory and deceptive assertions as :—"that every penny expended, is profitably laid out," "every child educated is a direct gain to the community,"—"If we do not already perceive the benefit, we shall certainly do so, when the fruit has ripened. It will then be gratefully acknowledged that we have not lavished too much on the cultivation of the tree." These and similar trite and empty phrases, however, ought not really to have the least weight with any but the very feeblest intellects. It is mere moonshine, to talk of the "profit" upon the outlay, when it has been abundantly shown, again and again, and all thoughtful and observant men, have long ago come to the conclusion; that unmitigated evil, in a variety of shapes, has hitherto resulted from the "forcing" system, that has unfortunately been in vogue, now throughout the country for a long series of years. There were, long previously, ample opportunities, for obtaining really sound and useful instruction, by all, to whom it would have been an advantage, by all, who chose to apply for it, and whose parents were in a position to pay the very moderate expenditure needed for its acquisition. Whenever the State intermeddles to manufacture a commodity or to dispense that, which it ought to be left to private enterprise to produce or provide, we may be quite sure that from that moment all will be muddle, and confusion, invariably attended too with profuse extravagance as well. This was seen not long ago, when the Government, ill-advisedly took into its own hands, the telegraphic business, which had long been ably and profitably conducted by various private companies. From that time to the present, it has been carried on at a loss, in round numbers of about £500 a day! In other words, that large section of the public, which never

requires under any circumstances to avail itself of this mode of communication, is compelled to pay upwards of £180,000 a year for the benefit of those who habitually use the wires! The palpable injustice and absurdity of such a proceeding, every one, perceives readily enough. Yet the unfairness and folly of the "cramming" scheme, are far more stupendous, while its costliness to the community at large, is of course immeasurably greater.

There may, very possibly be, many honest and conscientious advocates of any system, however pernicious its results. These they blindly ignore, obstinately refusing to listen to any arguments opposed to their own prejudiced views. Minds of this calibre it is, that are prepared to justify and applaud the senseless policy that is daily and hourly accomplishing such irretrievable mischief. The patient endurance of the British public, nevertheless has its limits, already murmurs, loud and deep, are making themselves heard here and there. Charges of gross extravagance, have been indignantly preferred not only against the London School Board, but against other Boards in various places. Before long, we may rest assured, that as the imposition of increasing rates goes on, the discontent—already unmistakably manifested—will augment, till at last, when the country shall have shaken off its present supineness, we may hope to find the whole of the existing Boards summarily swept away, and sound, healthy, and practically useful instruction take the place of hollow, miserable, mock "education,"—an education, that requires the unremitting exertions of a team of energetic attorneys and an expenditure of thirty thousand a year, in the London district alone, to hunt up and drive into school the children, whose parents persistently fail to perceive the benefit of the proffered boon.

Mr. G. B. Richardson, a member of the London School Board, writing on this subject, contends "that the Legislature contemplated that in every School Board school, would be

found the children of the well-to-do artisan or the small tradesman, paying the full fee comprising the whole, or at least, a large part of the cost of their education, as well as the children of those, who could only pay a part of such fee, as also those who might not be able to pay any part of it. The Act contemplates the same education and the same advantages to every class. Indeed, it does not recognise classes; all were to be on the same footing as regards elementary education. There was not to be a free school here, for the very poor, with a semi-efficient staff, and another school there, with a first-class staff but a high fee. Yet that is the case now, and in many of our Metropolitan divisions we have Board schools with high fees, which are, either in whole or in part, never remitted, and in others we have free School Board Ragged Schools open to all, but acceptable to none but those of the lowest class. This I contend to be contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of the statute. But this infirm policy of School Boards is not alone evidenced in the fixing a *minimum* fee, but in the terms of remuneration to the head-masters and mistresses. They are allowed a certain annual salary, increasing to a *maximum*, and, in addition, a moiety of the Government grant under certain heads, the other moiety being divided among the remaining staff. In one school in the Metropolis the remuneration of the head-master has been £520. Several head-masters have received close upon £400, and head-mistresses up to £300. But, apart from the question whether such sums as these, are not a parody on the word economy in elementary education, consider what is the result of this mode of remuneration upon the children for whom it was the duty of the School Board to provide schools—viz., to use Mr. Stanley's own words, 'those for whom efficient and suitable provision had not been made.' All know, none better than Mr. Stanley, that in the Metropolis these were the neglected children of the poorest class. But these are not the children the masters and mistresses of Board

schools want to see in their schools. Because they have been neglected, and can pass in no standard, they will not contribute to the Government grant, which forms so large a portion of their remuneration. Every effort is made to fill these schools with a better class, that they may be able to refuse the neglected children when seeking to be admitted; and, if admitted, the teachers' interests are naturally towards those who will secure to them the best results; and yet these neglected children are admittedly those whom the School Boards were to seek out, and to secure to them a sound elementary education. *Primâ facie*, this is done by low fees, but practically these low fees draw the children from other schools, and the poor, neglected children are left, to be gathered in here and there, into some ragged or low-class school, to which they must travel a long distance, and mainly that the masters and mistresses of the other schools may not have them contaminated by the presence of these ragged and neglected children, and that they may not suffer in the possible serious diminution in their share of the Government grant. How plainly is the first infirmity in this policy of fixing a *minimum* fee found to be grafted on to this second infirmity, which drives the poor and neglected children away from the schools in which they ought to find a ready entrance! How does the whole system result in a vast waste of financial power, and trench deeply on the pockets of the unfortunate ratepayers! Why does Mr. Stanley, who is really an economist and anxious to reduce the current expenditure of our schools, argue the question on side issues, as if it were a point of contention between Church schools and Board schools? It is not so. It is a question of finance. It is a question affecting the interests of our poorer children. It is a question affecting, above all, the moral status of the well-to-do parent, who knows that his richer and poorer fellow-ratepayers are being compelled to contribute towards the education of his children that which he ought to be paying

himself, and who, knowing this, cannot but be humiliated by the thought, if he have anything of the right feeling that I believe generally fills the breast of an English artisan."

The Rev. G. S. Whitlock, Vicar of Christ Church, Chelsea, wrote to the *Times*, not very long since, stating that "in a court, called Queen's Gardens, Fulham Road, an admirably-built, substantial and commodious school had been erected by the Board, with spacious play-ground and every appliance, including 2 class-rooms; a head teacher at £100 a year, an assistant mistress and a monitor. The attendance began with 5! dwindled down to 4! and had eventually risen to 11 infants! Let any one who may think proper, work out, at his leisure, what is the probable cost to the industrious community of a hundred of such schools, constructed say for 400 pupils each, at the average rate of payment by the Board of say £15 per head; with a perpetual annual charge of £2 12s. a head for maintaining the same.

Here is an instance of the way in which the colossal Metropolitan Board, discharges its duties. With a staff costing more than twelve thousand a year, including the head clerk at £1,000, an architect at another thousand, and a sites clerk at £250, and after having expended money by millions upon schools and schoolrooms, will it be believed, that it was suddenly discovered that not one single schoolroom out of the whole lot, was adapted for its intended use, until new floorings should have been added to each, arranged in steps so that each tier of forms might be severally raised a few inches above the one in front, gradually from the teacher's desk to the rear?

This operation, costly enough, even in one school, but multiplied by the number of buildings in each district, and necessarily entailing other extensive structural alterations, is said to have amounted, in the aggregate, to many thousands of pounds, and gave rise to fresh jobbing on a grand scale, simply to

rectify a blunder that could never have been perpetrated if the Board whereat the original plans were settled had but possessed even the most rudimentary knowledge of the business it had undertaken.

Nor are provincial School Boards reluctantly liberal in dispensing the funds at their disposal. At a meeting, in December, 1877, of the Liverpool School Management Committee, it was agreed to accept a tender of *fifty pounds* for putting up an apparatus for sharpening slate pencils!

On the 6th December, 1877, a further increase of the educational rate was notified at the Birmingham School Board, when a precept was approved for a rate of 8d. in the pound, to produce £46,500. This is an increase of 33 per cent. upon the rate voted last year, which was then double the *maximum* anticipated by the promoters of the School Board at the time of its formation.

Lavish as the Metropolitan School Board has been, in dispensing the funds it has for several years been borrowing, the School Board at that hotbed of radicalism, Birmingham, has in some respects exceeded it in reckless extravagance. Upon the true "liberal" principle of squandering, whenever an opportunity offers, the money of others; with a princely disregard of all considerations of economy, we are assured, that "the new schools exceed in magnificence any similar structures in the kingdom!" Architectural decoration one would imagine to be altogether out of place in connection with pauper schools constructed moreover, *ære alieno!* levied by means of an eight-penny rate. There were, in 1874, 60,472 children to be dealt with; 31,740 of them were already amply and inexpensively provided for, in Voluntary Schools. To accommodate the remaining 28,732 no less than twenty-seven schools were erected at a cost, verging upon half a million. The percentage of absence on reasonable grounds, allowed by the Government, is 13, but at Birmingham it reaches 27! In one district con-

taining 4 schools capable of holding 4,177 pupils, there were 2,164 empty places.

The grant, obtained throughout the whole country, for all the Board Schools was 13s. 3½d. per scholar; for the Birmingham Board it was, however, only 12s. 10d. At a Board meeting there was much seeming lamentation over the destitute condition of many of the children, "but the unspeakable value of the Christian religion, as a remedial power, on the conscience of these lost little ones, was altogether ignored. One speaker, who ventured to mourn the absence of Christianity in the teaching, was sneered down for his pains."

In an unlucky hour, in the year 1872, the unfortunate parish of Smeeth, in Kent, resolved to try the School Board system, and handed over to a Board (with power of withdrawal at three months' notice) a school previously managed, but not properly supported, by the voluntary system. After a twelve-month's trial, it was found that the school cost the ratepayers 9d. in the pound. The previous managers were able to show the ratepayers that if they submitted to a rate of 6d. the school could be properly supported on the voluntary principle. This they agreed to do, and the school was withdrawn from the Board management. The Board, finding that it had nothing to do, dissolved itself as far as it could, and it was supposed that at the end of the three years' term, its existence would absolutely cease. The ratepayers were, therefore, naturally astonished at receiving a notice from that fountain of wisdom the Educational Department, that they must elect a new Board, as any parish that has once called into being a School Board, must keep it up for ever, unless the 41st sect. of the Act of 1876 can be construed so as to effect a removal of the incubus. Smeeth will otherwise be put to the expense of electing a new Board, and this Board will have no school to manage and no power to build one, as there is already and has long been ample accommodation for all the school-children in the parish!

At Oxford, too, there is a regularly constituted Board, but without any schools to superintend.

"The third triennial election of the Buckingham School Board," says a correspondent of the *Times* on the 27th Dec., 1877, "affords a remarkable instance of how a School Board does not necessitate any Board schools. The vicar (the Rev. W. F. Norris), who has been on the two former School Boards, but did not seek election on the present, has always maintained that the desire of the Government is not to force a rate system, but to see that the people were properly educated. Six candidates offered themselves for five seats. They were all lay Churchmen and all Conservatives, but three represented the Board system and three the Voluntary system. The rejected candidate was Mr. Small, a member of the Church Association; and another candidate in the minority belonged to the same body. The rate party were supported by the radicals and dissenters, aided by Mr. J. G. Holyoake. Nevertheless, the three Church candidates were triumphantly returned."

It seems hardly credible that ratepayers should be put to the expenses attendant on a Board, without any probability of obtaining even the semblance of a result. Such a proceeding can only be compared to the act of a man who should go to the expense of erecting a powerful steam-engine, for which he could neither provide fuel nor work!

The most useful and judicious measure that could now be passed, would be one conferring upon all School Board districts the power of dispensing with the encumbrance of any Board the existence whereof has been found to be either useless or prejudicial. All children also, whatever their age, who can pass creditably in what is called "Standard No. 4," should at once be exempted from all further compulsory attendance. These are, however, so obviously the suggestions of common sense that there is only a remote probability of their being adopted.

Is it conceivable, that Noddledom in its wildest vagaries

could perpetrate greater absurdities than those here cited? It would nevertheless be easy to fill a large volume with the records of proceedings even more preposterous still, pointing out, moreover, how the Board goes on building—persistently building new schools—even in situations where there is already an absolute excess of accommodation!

Little astonishment then need be felt at the stupendous estimate of £1,707,055 complacently voted on the 1st August, 1876, on the motion of Lord Sandon, as the National Grant towards "Education" (of course, over and above the gigantic sum levied by rates). This £1,707,055, exceeded the estimate of the previous year by £158,492. Fifteen additional inspectors and 15 inspectors' assistants having been appointed.

At the same time that this sum was voted, it seems also that there were no less than 17,323 voluntary schools (an increase on the preceding year of 966) accommodating 2,772,000 children. The Board Schools being 1,922 (an increase of 633) accommodating 387,000 children.

By Midsummer, 1877, the Voluntary Schools of the London district alone, could accommodate 286,789 children, at an annual expenditure of about £1 12s. a head, while the Board Schools could only accommodate 133,685, and that at a yearly cost of £2 12s. a head!

The present average cost of building a Metropolitan Board School may be taken to amount to £14 10s. per child accommodated. This is irrespective of the purchase of land, "surveyor's fee," interests bought up, and law expenses. In Dalgleish Street, Tower Hamlets, £700 was paid for ground and £15 15s. for fee to the surveyor. In Webb Street, Bermondsey, £300 was expended in land, the surveyor getting £11 11s. besides. In Barrow Hill Road, Marylebone, a piece of ground cost £300, the surveyor being paid £11 11s.; here "interests" had previously been bought up for £1,610, the surveyor getting £64 1s. on the transaction! In Haggerstone Road,

Hackney, £2,097 was paid for land, the surveyor obtaining £25, and the attorney to the Board as a *preliminary* fee £10 10s. In the report whence these interesting extracts are taken there are several pages (in small type) filled with details of similar recent expenditure. Then we are edified with a long list of payments for "furniture and fittings," £594 in one school, £643 in another, £468 in a third, £229 in a fourth, and so on. When a new school is built, and fitted, and furnished, let it not be supposed that the expenditure thereon is at an end. A new school in Peter Street, Farringdon Road, was found to have glaring defects, which it cost £890 to rectify. At a school in Wormington Road, it was found that the "young gentlemen" attending it, had access to it only through a mews; to spare them this unpleasantness, a private entrance was provided for them at a cost of £143 8s. When cases like these are multiplied by the score, or rather the hundred, it is easy to see how millions may be recklessly squandered by extravagant "ultra-Liberals."

It would seem, that long before 1870, London and its vicinity, at any rate, were abundantly provided with schools. The City of London School alone enjoys a revenue of £2,535, and the Freeman's Orphan School of £5,363 a year. Besides these there are St. Paul's, Christ's Hospital, Archbishop Tenison's, the Charterhouse, Bancroft's Hospital, Dulwich College, St. Olave's and St. John's, Southwark, Christ's College, Finchley, the Mercers' and the Stationers' Schools, many of the above being very richly endowed. There are many excellent proprietary schools, doing good service to the community; but great injury will necessarily be done to these by the unfair competition of the Board schools.

On the 11th October, 1877, at a meeting of the Vestry of St. James's, Piccadilly, it was resolved, against only one dissentient vote, to adopt the following memorial to the London School Board, proposed by the rector and seconded by Mr. Downes:—

"This Vestry, having regard to the fact that, by the needlessly low fees which are charged in many Board schools, large numbers of children are drawn away from voluntary schools, in which they have been paying higher fees without hardship or serious difficulty, whereby a great and unnecessary addition is made to a rate already heavy and threatening to become oppressive, do earnestly and respectfully pray your honourable Board to take such measures as in your wisdom you may think best for charging all children in your schools such fees as, upon due inquiry, there shall be found reason to believe their parents or friends are well able to afford."

One test of a good school, is the amount of Government grant, awarded on the report of the Inspector. In 1875 the Metropolitan Board Schools earned in this way 10s. 11½d. per scholar, while the Voluntary Schools earned 12s. 11¼d., or one-sixth more. But by far the most crucial and decisive test, was that already cited, of the scholarship examination. Commenting upon the ignoble and utter defeat there sustained by the picked scholars, deliberately chosen from the whole of the elementary schools, the *Times* took occasion to point out the great fact thereby conclusively established, observing :—

"That no satisfactory education whatever, even in the most elementary subjects, is at present imparted in the Board schools of the metropolis ; and that, while people are quarrelling about 'policies,' lads of 13 are still growing up, unable to spell and to count."

So it is, however ; and even now, after the lavish disbursement of millions, after nearly five years' trial of the Board, we are not only as far off from efficiency as ever, but the bewildered Public, squeezed as it has been between the various Boards, has discovered that their principal use is but "to make screens withal" !

The only people connected with this gigantic "job" who are to be congratulated, are the stipendiary clerks, the archi-

fects, the sites clerks, the inspectors, &c., who, whatever may be the changes or the shortcomings of successive Boards—however useless or even mischievous their hobbies and vagaries—will probably still continue, steadily to draw their liberal pay, until it merges into proportionably comfortable and well-earned retiring pensions.

Certainly school managers and teachers have no chance of leading very enviable or even independent lives. The exacting requirements of the Education Department would of themselves be more than sufficient to occupy them fully, were they to comply with them implicitly. Yet for all the elaborate returns they have to compile, they get no remuneration whatever. Mr. W. D. Parish, of Selmeston, referring to this subject, writes as follows:—

“Let me give a specimen of the demands which are made upon us. A few weeks ago, I was astonished to find that I was expected to fill up printed forms with upwards of 800 entries, previously to the visit of the inspector to our little school of 72 children. To-day I have notice of inspection for the same number of children, on whose behalf I am to make no less than 2,247 entries, many of which involve intricate calculations, and all of which must be verified by reference to four or five different books.

“All this is done to satisfy the stupid demands of the Parliamentary Pharisees and the Scribes of the Education Office, who increase our burdens day by day, and hold out no finger to our assistance or hand to our encouragement. So well is the Department informed already upon all these matters that if one of my 2,247 replies should be incorrect it would be detected immediately, and the grant to the school withheld till it is set right. What are they but snares for our entanglement? If it could only be known what these my Lords Mint, Anise, and Cummin exact of us, I think we might be delivered from their bondage.”

There can assuredly be, no shadow of doubt, as to the reasonableness of the complaint. A school manager, adverting to the above communication, expresses satisfaction that attention has been at last drawn

“to the exorbitant amount of work now imposed on the teachers in Government schools by the late regulations of the Education Department. This grievance, if not speedily remedied, must seriously prejudice the work of popular education. Our teachers have enough to do in securing the accuracy of the school registers, with a view to Government inspection; but an enormous

addition to their work is created by regulations which have sprung up in consequence of the relation between the Education Department and the School Boards. This work must be done either during the school hours or in the hours of leisure and recreation. If the former, the teacher is compelled to divide attention between two duties, each of which requires undivided attention, and the only way in which the requirements of the Government can be satisfied is by consigning the superintendence of the school to pupil teachers, who are themselves learners as well as teachers. If, on the other hand, the work has to be done in leisure hours, the teacher is debarred from that recreation which is absolutely necessary for the restoration of already overtaxed energies. In point of fact, by the new arrangements the duties of a teacher are supplemented by those of a clerk, and, so far from receiving any remuneration for this extra work, the teacher is to suffer the loss of the certificate by neglecting it. As the manager of a school, I pay my teacher for doing educational, and not clerical, work."

What indeed can be more preposterously unjust than to select and pay a man, to discharge certain specified duties, that, properly performed, must necessarily absorb all his waking hours, and then to thrust upon him in addition, and without any extra remuneration, work, no mention whereof was ever made to him at the time of his engagement, and which would of itself fully occupy the whole time of an active and industrious clerk? So it is, however, and the more any one of common sense investigates the proceedings of the unfortunate Department, whence such incongruous orders continually emanate, the more convinced must he feel that a little useful rudimentary education, to say nothing of the inculcation of ordinary habits of business, would be of the greatest benefit, not only to the "Parliamentary Pharisees and Scribes of the Education Office," but to those, who at present groan helplessly under their despotic sway!

The School Board system in London has succeeded in drawing upon itself a vast amount of the opprobrium of all persons able to form an opinion on the matter. It has added very largely to the already oppressive burden of the rates, and is cruelly harassing a very deserving but struggling class,—“it has caused much individual hardship, by arbitrarily closing existing schools, instead of allowing them to die out by the natural process of

competition; and it has made the very name of education odious to many poor persons, by its perpetual police-court summonses. Looking back at the educational history of the last few years, there can be no doubt, that if a tenth part of the money that has been wasted during the last 7 years by various School Boards had been equitably distributed among the managers of Voluntary Schools, very many more children would be at school than now; while the teaching imparted, would be far more satisfactory to those parents whose religious belief is a real and living principle. Such parents, among the richer classes, never dream of sending their children to schools where religion is shunted into a corner, and it is little to be wondered at, therefore, if religious persons, whatever their creed, regard with dislike a further extension of a system which, whatever its merits, treats religion as a matter of secondary importance as compared with secular learning," if indeed we can venture to dignify by the word "learning" the sort of rubbish it will be seen the School Board pupils bring away in their muddled heads after three years' assiduous cramming.

It will take a long time, and will be a difficult task on the part of future Boards to efface the memory of the wrongs that have been inflicted by the enforcement of compulsory attendance and the concomitant invasion of private rights.

At one police-office alone, the prosecutions of parents, for a long time together, averaged 40 a week, and many were attended with peculiar hardship. Take a case at random, reported in the *Times* as having occurred at Lambeth Police Court:—

"The child was without a mother, and the father said he had been out of work, and the child had no boots. The child, who was in court, appeared without boots."

Mr. Vockins, the Superintendent of the Lambeth School Board district, prosecutes the father for neglecting to send the child to school; the man pleads in vain that he had sent the

child to one school, and there was no room for him. He points to the barefoot child—how is the boy without the boots to go to school? “The magistrate said that had the matter been represented to the committee, no doubt boots would have been provided.” Boots would have been provided! But in this case boots not having been provided, the man must be fined. He has no means of paying, he must go to prison; and as he leaves the court he exclaims, “What! go to prison?”

“What a sad echo these words must have found in the heart of that poor motherless child left all alone—the boy without the boots,” is the comment of a correspondent, calling attention to the decision.

On the 23rd April last, James Caird, 11, and Albert Pike, 10, sharp-looking boys, were charged on remand with sleeping in the large gas-pipes on Bankside. Mr. Robinson, the School Board officer of the district, who found them in the pipe, said that he understood that they had been in the habit of sleeping there nightly; that they had run away from their homes, and that their parents could do nothing with them. Here a tall woman in a very excited state rushed towards the clerk's table and called out, “You are all a set of villains. Your School Board is ruining all the poor and parting man and wife.” She here suddenly took her wedding-ring off her finger and threw it at the magistrate, exclaiming, “Take that and pay yourself.” Mr. Benson, who dexterously caught the wedding-ring in his hand, asked good-humouredly, “Why did you throw your wedding-ring at me? I don't want it.” “Because,” was the reply, “you and the School Board part man and wife, and you may keep it. You are all a bad lot.” Mr. Benson asked her if she wanted him to keep the wedding-ring. The woman said she should not want it any longer. The husband here entered the court, and asked the magistrate to overlook what she had done. He had only been married to her three months,

and the boy had caused her a great deal of trouble. He had robbed them of small sums of money and would not go to school. The wife here rushed forward again and said, "That's all nonsense. It's all that infernal School Board that's ruining us poor people. The Board can buy Turkey carpets out of the poor people's money. They are a very bad lot altogether. You may keep my wedding-ring to pay the expenses." Mr. Benson told her to go home and keep herself quiet. When she came to her senses, if she came to him in a proper manner, and asked for her ring he would willingly give it to her. As to the lads, he should send them to an Industrial School, where they would be taught some useful trade. The parents, however, would have to contribute towards their support as far as their means allowed. The woman and her husband left the court without the wedding-ring.

Here is another harsh case, selected at hazard from a heap of others. It occurred at Guildhall:—

"A poor, respectable-looking woman, who said her name was Elizabeth Marks, applied to Sir Robert W. Carden for his advice under the following distressing circumstances:—Six months ago her husband was removed to a lunatic asylum, and she was left with five children to support. She worked at her needle from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock at night, and during the day, was obliged to keep her eldest child at home to take care of the others. The School Board officer insisted on her sending her eldest child to school, and threatened that unless she did, he would communicate with the parish officers and have her outdoor relief stopped. Sir Robert Carden asked if the girl could read and write. Mrs. Marks said she could, a little. Sir Robert W. Carden suggested that the applicant should send her to school and let one of the others mind the children. Mrs. Marks said her second and third children were nine and five years respectively, and the other two were younger, but she sent the nine and five years old

children to school, and if compelled to send the eleven years old one, she must give up her work and stay at home to mind the two youngest—in other words, they would have to starve. Sir Robert W. Carden told her to make that representation to the School Board officer. Mrs. Marks said she had done so, but he would not listen to it. He wanted to force her into the workhouse, so that her eldest child should go to school. Sir Robert W. Carden asked her whether it would not be better for her to go to the workhouse. Mrs. Marks replied emphatically in the negative. She was young and willing to work for her children, and had no desire to bury herself in a workhouse. She wished to know what she should do if the School Board still pressed her. Sir Robert W. Carden said that the School Board could do nothing but summon her to this court, and in that case she must come to Mr. Martin, the chief clerk, and he would tell her what to do. If the School Board interfered to prevent her receiving outdoor relief she could apply to him, and he would have the matter investigated. He gave her 10s. from the poor-box, and hoped that she would not be inconvenienced by the operations of the School Board.

A still more lamentable case was that of poor George Widowson (aged 57), who drowned himself in the Regent's Canal from fear of being sent to prison *again*; having been once summoned and imprisoned because his son, aged 11, would not go to school.

In May, 1876, the case of Mrs. Ward, of Denzell Street, St. Clement's, excited great sympathy, she having been driven to commit suicide, simply through the worry caused by repeated applications on the part of the Board, consequent upon the irregular attendance of her children at school.

At Woolwich, George Wright, 2, Dawson Street, Plumstead, appeared to a second summons for neglecting to send his child Martha to school. Mr. Sydney Gedge, solicitor to the

London School Board, appeared on behalf of the Board. The case created considerable interest, in consequence of Mr. Balguy, having at the first hearing, made some strong remarks on the conduct of the School Board officers in entering people's houses with their hats on and displaying a want of consideration for the feelings of the poor. It was alleged as the cause of the child's absence from school, that she was nearly blind and was only then recovering from the effects of measles, the magistrate complaining that the School Board officers did not take the trouble to ascertain the real cause of the absence of children from school. Mr. Gedge said : The facts are, that the woman who attended, when the first summons was called on, did so without the knowledge of the defendant, and made statements which were not true, the measles and consequent loss of an eye having occurred many years ago. It was not, therefore, a truthful excuse for the child's non-attendance at school, and I have now to ask your worship to convict the prisoner. Mr. Balguy : Don't call the man a prisoner. Mr. Gedge : I beg pardon ; defendant. Mr. Balguy : I don't find fault with the School Board without cause. I repeat that your officers, either through ignorance, neglect, or other cause, summon poor people here without first taking the trouble to ascertain the real cause of the children's absence from school. I have received a letter from the Chairman of your Board in reference to this case, asking me to let him know of all cases of neglect of duty on the part of the officers, and I mean to do so. Your summonses, coming sometimes in dozens together, without proper inquiry having been made, give us a great deal of trouble. Mr. Gedge : It is all in your day's work, the Legislature having laid it upon you. The defendant, an Arsenal workman, said : My wife never showed me the summons, and I knew nothing of it until I saw it in print. Mr. Balguy : That is frequently the case. The husbands are at work, and the wives hide the summonses out of their way to conceal their neglect in not

sending the children to school. You are, however, responsible, and are now fined 1s. and 2s. costs.

At the Runcorn Police Court, on the 20th November, 1876, James Herrinshaw, a labourer, was sent to gaol for seven days for not sending his child to school. The defence was that his wife had sold his furniture and left him, and was now living with her children in another part of the town. The Bench were of opinion last week that he was not liable, but the case was adjourned for counsel's opinion, which proved adverse to the defendant. On Monday the Bench inflicted a fine of 5s., and in default of payment defendant was committed to gaol.

One of the comic papers recently alluded in the following terms to one of these oppressive cases of School Board persecution :—"A poor laundress sends her graceless rogue of a son to school. He plays truant. She sends him some more, and he plays truant a lot. The more she starts him off the more he never arrives. Presently the School Board gets after the good woman, and she is preserved in stone for a week, picking oakum—her offspring going loosely about seeking what they may devour, but finding nothing, and wishing they had somebody to cook it for them and put salt on it. When the mother oozes out of prison, sore-handed and sick, she has a fine time collecting and identifying her posterity, but no orders for washing, and not much character—and there you are, Mister School-Board Man, and how do you feel about it? You may thank your stars, my hearty, that the Town Crier, who is an ass, has not an ass's privilege, or you would get a lawful and an awful kicking. Indeed he'd make you sing."

"The indiscriminate prosecution of parents by School Boards for not sending their children to school seems likely to lead to awkward results," says the *Pall Mall*, "and an incident which lately occurred at the Wigan police-court shows that a mother, driven to bay, can occasionally retaliate on her prosecutors in a manner alike unexpected and disagree-

able. The wife of a man named John Appleton appeared at the court to answer a summons by the Wigan School Board for not sending her child to school. Mrs. Appleton had a complete answer to the charge. Her boy was suffering from an attack of measles, and a postponement of educational requirements was therefore desirable, not only on his account, but also on that of the other children attending the school. Fearing, however, that her statement might be discredited by the magistrates and the School Board officials, she produced the child in court with the measles 'well out' upon him, thus affording ocular demonstration of his afflicted condition. The effect of this proceeding was that the summons was immediately dismissed, and the mother was ordered to take the boy home at once. The Bench, it is stated, expressed themselves strongly on her conduct in bringing the child into court; but Mrs. Appleton, nevertheless, won a victory over the School Board, and, no doubt, chuckled immensely over the discomfiture of her antagonists."

Here is a glaring instance of the paltry but mischievous tyranny of the Metropolitan School Board. It was reported in the *Times* of the 16th February last that at the Westminster police-court the manager of a theatre was summoned for employing in a pantomime six children under ten and two over ten years of age. The evidence showed that they had been much benefited by the training they had received. They were taught—by instructors specially engaged—reading, writing and music, and were also regularly drilled. They were, moreover, brought up to earn their livelihood honestly, and so to relieve their parents of the burden of supporting them. The wages weekly gained by these eight children amounted to nearly £4 10s., and the bright aspect, cleanliness, intelligence and the demeanour in the witness-box of the children proved beyond doubt that they had been thoroughly cared for and really well instructed. They contrasted in all respects marvellously with

the dirty, ill-favoured, worse-conditioned, brawling young blackguards who might be seen on the same afternoon turning out of a Board school at no great distance, yelling and hooting, driving passers-by from the footpath into the road, jeeringly observing that the kennel was quite good enough for them! The School Board triumphed over the unfortunate manager who, owing to the pressure brought to bear upon him, was compelled to dismiss the children and to pay the costs of the summonses. It may be readily enough conceded, that had the poor parents of these children the choice of employment for their offspring it might be better to select one in which the hours of work were earlier and the atmosphere more salubrious. But beggars cannot be choosers, and in these times, when remunerative employment is hard enough to get, by persons of competent skill, no one, capable of forming an opinion on such matters, can fail indignantly to denounce the inquisitorial and meddling conduct of this Board in thus stepping in between parents and their children, and despotically compelling them to rescind an arrangement so obviously and materially beneficial to both parties.

Acts like these, however, tend more than anything else to demonstrate the mischief caused by giving arbitrary powers to people of this kind, who, vested for a time with a little brief authority, seem actuated scarcely by any other motive, but the paltry desire, at all hazards, to convince those about them of their self-importance.

It will perhaps scarcely be credited that the disbursements caused by enforcing compulsory attendance actually exceed £28,000 a year! an enormous sum to pay, in order to drive those—who are usually sufficiently alive to their own interests—to accept the proffered “priceless boon!” In six years there were actually 9,172 prosecutions and 1,304 unfortunate victims were fined 5s. each for the non-attendance of their offspring. As already stated in the “Introduction,” the

estimated cost, for the year 1878-79 of "compelling attendances" is £28,720, so that at all events, the attorneys to the firm on the Embankment have a lucrative prospect before them.

It is, by the way, a somewhat noteworthy fact, in connection with this subject, that the gradual spread of Education has a very remarkable effect upon the statistics of insanity, and it is interesting to find, that at St. Petersburg, where the "boon" is not very extensively diffused; the proportion, the number of lunatics, bears to the whole population, is 1 to 1,043. In Milan it is 1 to 244. At Paris 1 in 222; while in London, with its active and zealous School Board energetically at work, the relative proportions are 1 to 200! Possibly, by the time the Board-rate has risen to 2s. 6d. it may be found expedient to convert all these costly schools into lunatic asylums.

At all events, it must doubtless be as unsatisfactory to the ratepayers, as it is disheartening to the worthies who sit complacently week after week in their luxurious Board-room, on the memorable three hundred guinea carpet, to reflect that after several years' arduous struggle, nothing whatever worth mentioning, has been achieved in amelioration of the condition of the little wretches on whose behalf so many millions have been extorted from pockets already for the most part, indifferently provided enough, and ill able to afford this additional and cruel fine.

Little censure perhaps attaches to the individual members of the Board, for these persons really have little, if any discretion left them by the Legislature. The duties of the Board are in a great measure executory—limited simply to carrying out the provisions of an ill-considered statute, and the Board officiates moreover under the direction and coercion of a Committee of the Privy Council. The operose and expensive system sprang from a notion that "the elementary education" of the lower orders ought to be gratuitously, or as nearly as possible freely, dispensed to all who chose to apply for it, while all who

seemed insensible to the charm attaching to the "priceless boon" should be mulcted, for allowing their offspring perversely to absent themselves from the "feast of reason" provided for them !

The proud result, at the end of all these years, is a profusion of schools, some admirably built, tolerably ventilated, and perfectly drained, supplied with an army of well-paid teachers, books, diagrams, black-boards, benches, desks, slates &c., without stint—and yet ; when two valuable prizes are offered for competition to the two best out of 113 picked and carefully-chosen pupils—not, be it observed, to lads indiscriminately selected from the entire mass—the whole edifice crumbles into dust, the pillars of clay, bow beneath the image of brass, and the pitiable confession is made, that these diligent and exemplary youths, write badly, spell worse, and scarcely possess even the crudest notions of grammar or history ! It may be, that the time that should have been devoted to these elementary matters has been preferably spent in acquiring habits of discipline, subordination, civility, cleanliness or decency. Here is the testimony of some of those who have had the misfortune of living in the neighbourhood of the places where elementary erudition, combined with manners, is dealt out to all applicants !

The Code of Regulations for 1876 specially enjoined :—
"That all reasonable care be taken to bring up the children in habits of punctuality, of good manners and language, of cleanliness and neatness, and also to impress upon the children the importance of cheerful obedience to duty, of consideration and respect for others, and of honour and truthfulness in word and act." No instructions could possibly be better devised or more appropriately worded.

But now for the accomplishment.

A, who has dwelt for several years within a few hundred yards of a Board School, states :—

“Early and late, and at midday, this street and the adjoining streets are thronged by scores of children of all ages either assembling half an hour before the school hour, or after having been dismissed. They are usually joined by gangs of idle “loafing” roughs, from whom they learn during these vacant hours, far more evil than can be counterbalanced by any smattering of knowledge they may pick up from their paid teachers. Not unfrequently, for half an hour or an hour together, such is the amount of hooting, yelling, shrieking, roaring, intermingled with ribald oaths and the foulest and most obscene expressions, bellowed out to the disgust of all decent passers-by, and of all who have the misfortune to live within earshot, that what was formerly a quiet orderly neighbourhood is now all but uninhabitable.”

B's testimony is much to the same effect. He adds that : —“I have lived where I now reside, over thirty years, and can endure a good deal, but I must submit to the expense and discomfort of removal, because it is simply impossible to tolerate the brutality and foul-mouthed blackguardism of the boys attending the Board School in the next street. As a rule, they ring the area bells of all the houses they pass, sometimes two or three times a day. They make a point of insulting all whom they can surround, especially ladies, whom they delight to annoy and affront by the filthiest and most indecent acts—acts, to which the most abandoned ruffians about Whitechapel, Shoreditch, or the Seven Dials would scarcely venture to have recourse. After dusk, the foot-pavements, door-steps, lamp-posts, letter-boxes, curb-stones, are continually polluted, and that, to such an extent that it is difficult to pick one's way without contamination. Any remonstrance infallibly gives occasion to insolent abuse, and not unfrequently to a shower of stones or mud. The constant hurlyburly, din and uproar is perfectly deafening, and as long as it lasts, utterly prevents attention to any work one may have on hand, while to invalids or to a

persons of weak nerves it causes excruciating torture. Every one in the neighbourhood unites in cordially execrating these Board Schools and everything connected with them. Formerly the street lads were tolerably quiet, well-behaved, and at least decently conducted—*now*, from the corruption inevitable when hundreds of lawless lads and youths are allowed several times daily, to congregate and set at defiance all authority and control of any sort, the majority become rapidly more and more brutalized, and, in short, in every respect, utterly worthless. As for acquiring any ‘useful knowledge’ at these schools, no one but the veriest simpleton could believe for a moment so palpable an absurdity.”

At a trial in December, 1876, it was proved that the erection of a Board School even in such a neighbourhood as Mile End, permanently depreciated the value of the adjoining property for a considerable distance from 12 to 15 per cent! What then must be the reduction in value in more important localities?

A short time since, a number of School Board children, of both sexes, having obtained a half-holiday, noisily disported themselves for an hour or two in a street only a few hundred yards in length. When they had gone, the flags forming the foot pavement, were found to have been scrawled over in bold letters in chalk with the foulest and most obscene expressions—so abominable, in fact, that it might reasonably have been supposed that the words and expressions made use of, could only have been in vogue amongst the very vilest of the vile. In the same street, not long ago, a van laden with furniture was being unloaded at the door of a private house. It so happened that a 21b box of Havannah cigars, unobserved by the porters, had fallen from the waggon on to the road. In an instant it was pounced upon by a passing group of School Board youths, who, almost in the twinkling of an eye, appropriated not only the contents—of the value probably of two or three pounds—

but the box itself; in a few seconds the whole gang of pilferers had disappeared. No trained or practised thieves could possibly have displayed greater adroitness.

There can be no doubt whatever in the mind of any man who has taken the trouble to acquaint himself with facts, that the sort of "schooling" bestowed at these day schools is inevitably productive of a vast and growing increase in the number of juvenile depredators. Over and over again it has been found that lads charged with theft, have in their possession, copies of serials of the Jack Sheppard school of literature, lives of pirates, highwaymen, notorious murderers, &c., or other "poisonous trash" of the "blood and thunder" class, the rapidly-increasing sale of which too plainly attests one deplorable result of the "craze of the day." In short, the only reading that the gutter children seem to take any delight in at all, appears to be that, wherein deeds of lawlessness and violence are minutely described with the most loathsome and harrowing details.

Those who fallaciously arrive at an opposite conclusion probably deduce their calculations either from the published returns of committals or convictions. Nothing can be more erroneous. Of late years, the remuneration to prosecutors and witnesses for their trouble and the unavoidable expenses they have to incur, is so trivial that in thousands of cases people patiently submit to the injuries they have sustained, rather than expose themselves to further loss, to say nothing of all the disgusting concomitants of an attendance at any of our so-called courts of justice. The "educated" criminal, again, takes his precautions more advisedly than a common illiterate thief, and adroitly eludes the net of the detective, where the ignorant bungler would readily be caught.

Very recently Liverpool, was found to be infested by a numerous gang of young thieves, dwelling in the unsuspecting quarters of model lodging-houses forsooth! each lad bearing

an assumed name, culled from the Newgate Calendar, and marking the type of character, they respectively aspired to imitate and specially delighted to honour.

Thirteen of these precocious robbers were arrested in one batch; all were able to read and write well, all having partaken of the much-vaunted "priceless boon," so liberally but improvidently lavished upon them.

The germs of crime are rife enough indeed in all directions; the kind of culture they meet with in Board schools, soon develops them, and hence the hosts of embryo Turpins and Blueskins, now springing up far and wide over the land.

The worst form of youthful depravity that has of late manifested itself, and has hitherto been treated with culpable lenity in many of the police-courts, is shown in the diabolical practice of placing obstructions upon railways in order to wreck a train, and to plunder the luggage of the mangled and murdered passengers.

The average ill-conditioned ruffian of bygone times, adopted a course of pocket-picking or shoplifting, to enable him to lead a life of comparative ease and indolence. Give lads of this kind, with natural criminal tendencies, a smattering of "education," and they develop into promoters of fraudulent companies, borrowers of hundreds of thousands on forged leases, or contractors for foreign loans. They find an artfully-persuasive prospectus more lucrative and less hazardous than open lawlessness, though the result, to the plundered victims is far more disastrous.

It was boldly prophesied, that one fertile source of crime would be removed, if the "intelligent working man" were provided with cleanly, healthy and well-ventilated dwellings. This was benevolently accomplished, on a large scale at Liverpool, but the prediction was unhappily falsified, for the new abodes became forthwith the residences of the gangs of young reprobates above alluded to, subsisting almost entirely on plunder.

We need scarcely, however, travel as far as Liverpool to find instances of the baneful influence of a smattering, or of an apology for education.

Every criminal court teems with cases like the following, lately tried at the Old Bailey, where Arthur Cox, 16, Frederick Mounser, 16, and Joseph Kirkman, 17, all described as clerks, were tried and convicted; Cox of forging, and Kirkman of feloniously uttering a request for a cheque-book and 25 blank forms of bankers' cheques with intent to defraud. The three prisoners were also convicted of being concerned in forging and uttering an order for the payment of £60 15s.; a second for the payment of £90 15s.; and a third for £33.

The circumstances were somewhat remarkable, in that the prisoners, who were mere boys in appearance, were proved to have spent the whole of the ill-gotten gain on the Thames about the time of the Oxford and Cambridge boat race, and in living at some of the best hotels abutting on the river.

The Common Serjeant, in passing sentence, remarked on the prisoners having begun early in life to commit crime, and one which, he said, not long ago was almost invariably expiated by capital punishment. He sentenced Cox to 18 months' and Mounser and Kirkman each to 12 months' hard labour.

Again, still more recently, at Lambeth, five boys, all about 12 to 13 years of age, were charged, on remand, with breaking into a shop in Stockwell Road, and stealing therefrom £5 in gold and silver. The shop, rented by a medical man, was shut up at night and left without any one on the premises. A few nights back an attempt was made to force the front door, and in doing so a key was broken in the lock. An entry was afterwards made by a back window and the money taken away. A second entry was subsequently made, and the thieves, failing to find any money, amused themselves by upsetting some of the bottles containing medicine. Detective Murphy, of the W division, succeeded in taking the prisoners

into custody, as well as a boy named Jack Sheppard, who was, however, discharged last week, and now appeared and gave evidence implicating three of the other boys. About Iremonger, the School Board officer said, he had made inquiries, and he believed the prisoners had all been in the habit of reading certain "sensational" publications. Mr. Chance sent them to reformatory schools.

The two miscreants, Hyslop and Denham, both under 19, who for some time dismayed the inhabitants of Blackheath by various impudent highway robberies, had in their possession, when arrested, well-thumbed copies of *Claude Duval, the Dashing Highwayman*; of *Jack Sheppard*; *Lives of Celebrated Cracksmen*; *Adventures of Notorious Pirates, Heroic Freebooters, and Others*; thus showing pretty evidently to what account these two worthies had turned the education that had been liberally vouchsafed to them.

In Nov. 1877, two boys, of 16 and 17 respectively, were convicted for breaking into a church at Welham and plundering the parish chest; they were tracked in consequence of having left behind them a copy of *The History of Robin Hood*. The title-page bore the name of one of the prisoners.

In the July preceding, a little ruffian of 11 years, who had had an elementary education, was tried before Mr. Justice Manisty, for the murder, and convicted of the manslaughter, of a poor child under 3 years of age. The crime was committed under circumstances indicative of great deliberation and atrocity. After a sojourn in a reformatory for five years he will not improbably lapse again into a career of crime.

There are in England and Scotland 75 of these reformatories, containing, on the 31st December, 1876, 5,402 boys and 1,212 girls. In industrial schools there were 13,745 children. The reformatories yield an annual profit of £5,400, while the balance of expenditure is against the industrial schools to the extent of more than £7,300 in the same time.

Four young gentlemen, whose united ages amounted only to 38, appear lately to have turned to account, in one way at least, their enforced attendance at the Board school in Abbey-street, Bermondsey. Having carefully scrutinised the premises, they made a raid upon them in the night and broke open a case containing books, slates, compasses, pencils, &c., which they proceeded to appropriate!

About the same time at Warrington police-court Miss Margaret Kilroy, a School Board pupil, was convicted of picking pockets. On being searched, a bag, containing £2 odd and several purses, was found upon her, the proceeds, as she admitted, of the work of one evening. She had been regularly taught the business by another girl, and illustrated her adroitness in the presence of the police by picking a pocket without arousing the least suspicion on the part of the owner.

A legal functionary, with an experience in courts of justice, extending over nearly forty years, and who having kept accurate statistical records of the various classes of offenders who had appeared before him, is in a position to corroborate conclusively from his records, the unwelcome statement, that the advance, as well as the commission of crime is very materially aided by modern education. Taking, as an example, 50 consecutive convictions of domestic servants for various crimes—some of them very heinous—we find that not one out of the whole of this large number, was unable to read or write, 28 had had more than a mere ordinary education, while 15 were designated in their respective calendars as reading and writing "*superiorly*." Now these 50 cases occurred between 1873 and the end of 1877; they comprised robberies of plate, jewels &c., amounting collectively to a very large sum; there were petty larcenies, forgeries of names to cheques and post-office orders, personations and conspiracies for the purpose of giving false characters in order to

enable thieves of the worst description to obtain admission into dwelling-houses. In the course of the evidence, in some cases, it transpired, that it is no uncommon practice amongst servants of the present day, to keep themselves *au courant* as to family matters of interest, by opening letters calculated to excite their curiosity, taking notes of the contents for future use. So great it seems is the proficiency of these "letter-burglars," that they can open with perfect ease any letter however carefully secured. A page of 16, who had, by the way, enjoyed the "priceless benefit" of three years' Board schooling, and had experienced the greatest kindness from an aged lady into whose service he had been taken, confessed to having regularly opened, nearly every letter that came to the house. Those, containing money orders, he destroyed, forging the name of his mistress to the order, obtaining the cash, and then sending acknowledgments of the receipt of the money to the sender, in a handwriting so exactly resembling that of his mistress, that until she had closely inspected it, she was unable to detect the fraud! He took impressions in wax of the keys of the cellar, writing-desk, cabinets of coins, storeroom &c., helped himself to all that he required, and lived in the greatest luxury. The old lady, pleased with his assiduity and intelligence, regarded him as a "perfect treasure," and though his fellow-servants had their suspicions of his integrity, she would listen to no insinuations against him. She had indeed gone so far as to add a codicil to her will, leaving him a legacy of £25. Having ready access to her escritoire, and a still higher opinion of his own merits, than the old lady had, he re-copied the codicil in a hand, exactly similar to her own, imitating, too, most remarkably the signatures of the attesting witnesses. He then burnt the original codicil, folding the improved one up with some other testamentary papers, and sealing them precisely as they had been before, and, but for a mere accident, the fraud would in all probability not have been dis-

covered. It was, however, found that the substituted legacy was £200 duty free, together with an annuity of £120 a year!

In another case, a confidential butler who had wormed himself completely into the good favour of a very wealthy but invalid master, adroitly substituted for the will which had been read over and approved, another, exactly resembling it externally, but making the worthy butler the residuary legatee, instead of a relative whom the testator had always destined to succeed him in the estate. Without the education this provident menial had received, he would assuredly never have risen from his lowly grade, to the rank of a country squire, with a very landed air, and a rent-roll of five thousand a year! To him therefore, "schooling" did indeed prove, a priceless boon. Another worthy of the same class, who from his position and opportunities was readily enabled to obtain information as to the internal plans and all other particulars of the various country houses in the neighbourhood of his master's dwelling, was for years in the habit of imparting this branch of useful knowledge to the leader of a notorious gang of burglars, whose headquarters were in Whitechapel. On payment of a stipulated sum, the thieves received a carefully-drawn plan of a selected house, impressions in wax of the requisite keys, and all requisite instructions respecting the inmates. If the plate, jewels and valuables obtained, were considerable, the informant obtained a further commission. Finding it desirable to change his situation in order to operate in a new field, he directed proceedings against his own master, allowed himself to be gagged and bound, in order to lull suspicion, while his active colleagues packed up and carried off valuables to the amount of more than £2,000, whereof his share was nearly £500. With that, and his previous gains, he opened an hotel in a fashionable watering-place, and would in all probability have lived happy ever after, and died respected, had it not been for treachery on

the part of one who had been for years his most trusted accomplice, and who knew his whole history.

These are mere samples of hundreds of similar cases which are of constant occurrence all over the country.

This is one at least, of the consequences the nation has brought upon itself, by weakly adopting one of the nostrums of deluded crotchets mongers who think that the proposed end justifies any means, and who care nothing for the infliction of wrongs however cruel and disastrous, in the impotent attempt to achieve an object which from their point of view presents itself to their shallow minds in a plausible guise.

In a clever work entitled *Fact against Fiction*, published by the Hon. Grantley Berkeley in 1874, it is stated (Vol. I. p. 208), "It can be seen at any time, by all who wish or who dare to look the fact in the face, that, by the statistics of the police, crime of all sorts has increased (an increase far beyond that which the growth of the population would account for) hand in hand with better education, as it is the cant to call it, and with the acquisition of letters—an acquisition, when attained, not *always* well-directed."

An able writer in the *Journal of Science* (July, 1876) well observed that "Universal literary culture, will suppress pauperism and crime in the very same year when 'free trade' effects the final abolition of war."

No better incident, than the following, is needed to prove, if not the absence of ordinary common sense, at least the utter incompetency, of the persons constituting the original Metropolitan School Board, for the duties they had undertaken or had had thrust upon them.

It was found, in the early days of their operations, that one of the greatest difficulties, wherewith they had to contend, was that of compelling the little illiterate victims, whom they drew into their net, to adopt the ordinary orthography or the vulgar pronunciation. Each ragged pupil, had his own notions

of spelling, and to that, he pertinaciously adhered. What was to be done? It is difficult to form an adequate idea of the fatuity that could suggest the proposed remedy, which amounted in effect to this—that as the gutter children obstinately resisted the old-fashioned mode of spelling, the public should be compelled to give way and adopt the phonetic or gutter style of spelling.

It never seemed to occur to the very sapient Board, that if their plan were adopted, all the boys and girls, all the adults and all existing scholars who have learnt the prevalent style, would have to re-commence their education in order to adopt the new system, no regard being had, to all the labour already expended in attaining this result, which would then be utterly thrown away.

The notion they seemed to have adopted was, that a Royal Commission could somehow accomplish this desirable end, render English spelling attainable in a few easy lessons, and English pronunciation uniform, establish a pleasant interchange of “v’s” and “w’s,” probably concluding with the general abolition of aspirates.

No two members of the Board are, however, of accord as to what ought to be done, nor do they seem ever likely to come to an agreement on the subject. There is no important object to be attained, nothing, in fact, to be gained, that could possibly be at all tantamount to the price that would have to be paid for the revolution.

An authoritative revision of the spelling of certain words might in some respects be advantageous, but who are to constitute “the authorities,” and how are their dicta to be enforced? A few dull crotchets mongers of no acknowledged position in the world of letters, cannot be expected to carry any weight, even with the aid of so doughty a champion as the individual who represents in Parliament a back-room in Burlington House!

Nevertheless, as if there were no limit to the absurdities of impracticable men, the thousand-pound clerk, of the Metropolitan Board, was actually directed to send round a circular in order to elicit the several opinions of all the lesser Boards in the kingdom on the subject. To have been consistent, it was facetiously suggested, that the letter should have been spelt somewhat as follows :—

“Skool Bord for Lundun,
“Victorier Embankment, W.C.,
“8 Dec., 1876.

“Ser,—I am direkted bi the Skool Bord for Lundun too forwerd u a koppee of the following Rezolushun :—‘That this Bord iz ov opinyun that a grat difikultee iz plast in the wa ov edukashun bi our prezent methud of speling, and that it iz hilee desirabl that the Guvernment shood be moovd too ishoo a Royal Kommishun for konsidering the best manner ov reforming and simpleefying it.’ I am, at the sam time, direkted too ask whether yor Bord wood be wiling to unit in a joint reprezentashun too be adress to the Edukashun Department on the subjekt.

“I am, Ser, yor obedeent Servunt,

“———, Klark to the Bord.

“To the Klark ov the Skool Bord for ——.”

However, the “circular” has been favourably received in some quarters, and though there is no probability of any result in our time, advantageous to the community, it will serve to keep up a harmless agitation among the quidnuncs of the day, and may restrain them from mounting some more mischievous hobby. The circumstance is only cited here to demonstrate the impracticability of the Board—the absence of business habits—besides a mistaken desire to meddle with matters with which they have really no concern.

It is much as if certain functionaries, charged with the administration of penal laws, were to report, that finding strong

objections on the part of convicted criminals to the infliction of punishment, and manifest inconvenience consequently arising therefrom, the magistrates would strongly recommend that all penal laws should on that account be repealed !

It is rumoured, that about 130 Boards have been induced to join in a memorial to the Education Department, in favour of a general reformation in English spelling ! The ostensible organ of the London School Board, takes occasion thereupon, to affirm that these 130 Boards "represent a population of 2,244,000, besides that of the metropolis." Nothing, however, can be more fallacious. There is no pretence for the absurd supposition that School Boards represent the prevailing opinions of their districts ! In many of these the Voluntary Schools and the children within them, far exceed in number the Board Schools and their occupants. This is undoubtedly the case in London, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester. It would be sheer nonsense to say that the Birmingham Board represents the opinions of the 400,000 inhabitants of that borough either on secular education any more than on the art of spelling. Or that the London Board, with schools for but a fraction of the population, can pretend to be the mouthpiece, on spelling reform or any subject whatever, of nearly four millions of people. "The voice of the majority might or might not go with the Board in favour of its crotchet ; but no one writing about the Board, is entitled to assume that it represents the whole population within its area. As to the power of the Board and its allies to bring about a revolution of the English language, chiefly in the interest of shorthand reporters, we may dismiss that at once to the limbo of improbabilities. Even should the Department incline towards a spelling commission, it has no power to issue one ; and it is doubtful whether, in the present state of public business, the Government is at all prepared to take up this additional burden. That our language is capable of much simplification is very

true; but a commission to bring its difficulties down to the comprehension of children learning the alphabet, is a little too much in advance of the age."

Were it requisite to adduce further evidence, to prove that the system to which reference has been made, is radically bad, that the education it is engaged in disseminating—if not utterly worthless—is shallow and imperfect, little better, in fact, than a miserable sham—it is only necessary to refer to the last report of the Inspectors of the London School Board, printed last December,

Should the reader desire to know upon what terms the Government grant is earned; and how the inspectors proceed; it may be here stated, that the grant is given, in proportion to certain results, supposed to have been attained.

Scholars above the age of seven, are individually examined in three subjects—viz., 1, reading; 2, writing (including spelling); and 3, arithmetic. They must, however, previously to their examination, be able to show, 250, out of a possible 440 or 450 attendances. All but the lowest standard in the school, may be examined by classes in two out of the four following subjects:—1, grammar; 2, history; 3, geography; 4, needlework. The higher standards may also take up for examination certain specific subjects, of which 10 are enumerated in the code.

The money may be earned in several ways—1, on an average attendance; 2, on individual passes in reading, writing and arithmetic; 3, on the class subjects, provided half the number examined pass satisfactorily in two of those subjects; 4, on individual passes in specific subjects.

"The mode of proceeding," says Mr. Macartney, "is briefly this: on a day of which notice has been given, the inspector arrives at a school, bringing with him, in many cases, an assistant inspector. The examination is partly oral, partly on slates (for Standard I., and sometimes Standard II.), and partly on paper. The principal part of the paper work consists of dictation and arithmetic. The arithmetic questions have to be framed by the inspector beforehand, and sent up to the Department to be printed. The dictation and

arithmetic papers are taken home and looked over by the inspector and his assistant. Now it is obvious that, as the inspector does not examine the schools in his district collectively or simultaneously, but consecutively, he must frame as many different sets of arithmetical questions in each standard as he has schools in his district, and he must, in addition, have fresh sets of questions every year for several years before he could venture to use again old sets of papers in his district. If he were not to take this precaution, his questions would, by being passed on from school to school, become known in the district, and his examination would become a farce. This is what *each* inspector has to do. Now, as there were last year eighty-three inspectors in charge of districts, and there will soon be ninety, we have to multiply the labour ninetyfold, in order to get at the true estimate of its amount. And, in the same proportion, as the waste of power in this method, is the waste of taxpayers' money in the printing of these innumerable different sets of questions."

Under such a system any schoolmaster of even ordinary tact, can with little effort, possess himself of copies of all the arithmetical problems, &c., that the inspector of his district is in the habit of setting !

Mr. Steele, one of the inspectors, mentions in his report, having had good

"reason to suspect that the setting of arithmetical problems has increased among teachers the very questionable practice of endeavouring to obtain copies of the sums given in other schools. Not that I would accuse every teacher who seeks to know the sort of examination another school has had, of a dishonest intention. It is natural, and it is customary with all teachers of all ranks, to ascertain the style and standard of the questions likely to be put to their pupils. But I wish to say distinctly, that if a teacher goes beyond obtaining a general outline for his guidance ; if, for example, having got possession of the questions set in another school, he practises his scholars in them, with the hope that the same may be given in his own examination, he is guilty of a fraudulent design ; and if his design succeeds, he is obtaining money and credit on false pretences. . . . At present, each inspector has his own arithmetical questions, which are printed for him by the Department. The preparation of these questions is a matter of some labour, and since it is necessary to change them frequently, they are soon obsolete and useless. I wish myself that these questions could be changed more frequently than they are ; and I venture to suggest that the Department might issue monthly to each inspector as many sets of arithmetic papers as he would be likely to want. At the end of the month they might be returned to be used again elsewhere. The questions in use in the various districts would, when revised and printed, form an immense stock to begin with. The advantage of this would be—(1) Economy in preparation and in printing ; (2) Uniformity of standard throughout the country ; (3) Reduction of the possibility of obtaining questions beforehand to a minimum."

Mr. Noble, referring as Inspector, to the districts of Greenwich, Southwark and Lambeth, adverts with satisfaction to the additional accommodation now offered to 65,227 children as contrasted with 49,093 "places" last year, the increase on the year being 16,134. The total number of schools in the three districts is 100. They are—he says—as cheerful, as commodious and compact; as well ventilated and lighted as could be desired. "In these respects" we are further assured "that they bear favourable comparison with any elementary schools in the kingdom, while the playgrounds have all been well arranged for play and drill."

The three districts, providing altogether accommodation for 73,554 children—and at a cost little short of a million sterling—only show an average attendance of about 78 per cent. of those on the rolls. This implies that one-fifth of the children habitually play truant, and proves at all events, that neither they nor their parents, hold "the priceless boon" in much estimation.

The attendance, too, is found to be irregular as well as unpunctual, but there is maintained, for the benefit of the pupils, whether present or absent, a chronic staff of 1,590 teachers of all denominations!

The junior pupil teachers and candidates are reported to be—as a rule—neither good scholars nor efficient teachers. But as each of these counts for 30 children, there are consequently 10,000 children, or one-seventh of the whole number, confessedly under inefficient instruction. There is said, moreover, to be a growing and a wide-spread dislike among the young teachers, after a time, for the work on which they are engaged, and there is no provision whatever in the schools for giving them proper training: They themselves, therefore, require constant supervision "to keep them from falling into idle habits and from contracting vicious methods of teaching." But the Head Masters having classes of their own to attend

to, are of course unable to observe what is going on immediately around them.

The inspector points out many other matters indicative of defective organization, and regrets, that there "is gradually getting to be less explanation and more committing to memory," and the teachers allege that they find this necessary, in order "to prepare the children for the Scripture examination."

Yet all goes on by line and rule. The classification of attainments, trumpery though in reality they may be, is minute and strict, and the percentage of "passes" from one standard to another is accurately registered. But mark the result. In class No. 1, wherein is dispensed, as is well known, the very humblest rudimentary instruction imaginable, there are 20,480 out of 49,360 pupils, while only 891 appear in Standard VI.!

The percentage being as follows:—

Standard ...	VI.	V.	IV.	III.	II.	I.
Percentage...	1·8	5	10·1	16·5	25·0	41·6.

The proportion was the same in the preceding year, so "that nothing has been accomplished in the direction of progress during the last year." When we thus find, that little more than 1 per cent. out of nearly 50,000 children are able to attain to the sixth standard, which in ordinary life would now-a-days be regarded as elementary indeed, can it be an unreasonable conclusion that the result, as measured by the stupendous cost might be deemed ludicrous, were it not absolutely contemptible?

"The boys and girls in an elementary school cannot sit down, or stand, or break up without as strict an observance of regulations, as soldiers at drill. They rise at the word 'one,' they turn at the word 'two,' they put their legs over the benches at the word 'three,' and so on. They are familiarised with 'standards,' and have to count attendances. The hours are measured out for them, with the punctuality of clockwork;

and, in short, they are converted for four or five hours a day into something as like machines as human nature can well be made. No boys in middle class schools or public schools are brought within any approximate degree of the same mechanism. It is Prussian drill as compared with English, or perhaps with French." The question, however, arises whether all this will have any permanent moral effect either upon the little creatures themselves or upon those with whom they have to associate.

There may be theoretical views and Utopian aspirations enough on this subject, and everything may be done with the best intentions; practically however, the children go back every day from school to their miserable homes, to unlearn all that they have there learnt. Little or no heed is given to the pitiable condition at night, of the poor starving lads, who are by day, compelled to sit a certain number of dreary hours on Board school forms, undergoing the grim regulation process of mental veneering. The usual fate of these urchins, during the hours that they are at the disposal of their parents, is to be driven out into the streets to sell—without any hawker's licence by the way—penny papers, matches, flowers or oranges, which are often not easily disposed of; any pence they may earn, being speedily converted into gin, to allay temporarily the morbid but insatiable cravings of those for whom they are made thus hopelessly to toil. To sustain themselves; having usually no alternative between perishing of hunger or thieving, it can scarcely be wondered at, if they do occasionally transgress the eighth commandment. Can any one, with the feeblest glimmering of common sense, fail to acknowledge the absurdity of dragging hundreds, not to say thousands, of these miserable objects within the precincts of a schoolroom, to be crammed with indigestible mental food, that can never be of the smallest service to them in enabling them to earn an honest living? Were they but taught the rudiments at least, of some simple trade, suitable to

their age and strength, infinitely better would it be for them than filling their heads with scraps of rubbish, which they have no ability to understand, and no power to retain. As Mr. Justice Manisty rightly observed, in his charge to the grand jury at Newcastle last July, "Little good could be expected from educating children during the day, if they have to return to scenes of filth and squalor, of misery and vice at night." It is obvious enough that this must always be the case, and that the only true remedy is to eliminate altogether the children, who are to be taught, from the noxious surroundings wherein they have been bred, to keep them entirely away from vicious and depraved companions, as is marvellously well accomplished in reformatories, industrial schools, and more especially in training ships, or in the admirably-conducted institution at Feltham. Here, wholesome discipline is uniformly kept up day and night, all the year round, and not even the most trivial fault is allowed to pass unnoticed. In the Board schools, on the other hand, whatever may be the control and subordination enforced during four or five hours, the moment the urchins are released, all semblance of discipline disappears, and their innate ruffianism unchecked in any way, manifests itself unmistakably, until school time the following morning. Those who have attentively considered the matter and have had opportunities of carefully observing, for long periods, and in different places, more especially in large towns, the baneful effects of allowing children not only to pass and repass through crowded streets making them their playgrounds for many consecutive hours, confidently affirm, that the irretrievable mischief thus engendered, outweighs a thousand-fold any supposed good derived from a knowledge of the alphabet, even when it has developed the ability, for imbibing the most virulent poison that is now disseminated broadcast without check or hindrance of any sort. The very worst class of literature is indeed the only kind of "reading" appreciated by the morbid palates of

the street boys, when once they have acquired all that is to be hoped for from Board school instruction.

Should any one ignorant of the facts, doubt the accuracy of the deduction, he may very readily satisfy himself, by noting during a morning walk, the headings of the periodicals most in vogue, either amongst errand boys or Board school pupils, sitting on doorsteps or loitering about the streets during their hours of idleness. He will probably not find a single printed page in their hands, that has not a most flagrantly mischievous tendency, that does not hold up to the admiration of the young, deeds of infamy, or baneful doctrines that could only give rise to honest indignation in any undepraved or healthy mind.

A sceptic desirous of testing the accuracy of the statements above put forth, relative to the habits and manners of the Board school pupils, seemingly so quiet, respectful, decorous and thoroughly under control in the presence of the master, took occasion to remonstrate subsequently with one of them, whom he found engaged in screaming, shrieking or yelling without the slightest apparent object, under the windows where a patient was dying. The reply elicited from the offender, was simply a torrent of fluent insolence combined with blasphemy, provoking the derisive laughter and applause of some ten or a dozen admiring schoolfellows.

Any lady who may chance to pass through a street whence the contents of a Board school are tumultuously issuing by scores or by hundreds, will find herself infallibly jostled from the pavement into the gutter by the unruly host, who will probably greet her discomfiture with shouts of derision. It was a very true remark, made by one who had observed for some years the gradual deterioration in the manners and habits of the lower orders, "that they receded from bad to worse, in an inverse ratio, to the progressive dissemination of so-called modern 'education.' If," added he, "I were desirous of picking

out a specimen of a juvenile street rough, glibly proficient in foul language, and manifesting knavish propensities and incipient rascality, I should select at hazard, a School Board lad of two years' standing. Were it necessary to pick out a more thoroughly confirmed scamp, rife with insolence and wholly unfit or unwilling to turn his hand to any useful handicraft, I should have to go no further than the motley crew who have had the benefit of four years' attendance at a Board school!" It is not of course implied, that they are taught what is bad, during school hours, the harm is done during the hours, when it is impossible to keep any hold over them. The same result inevitably follows, in a greater or less degree in any populous neighbourhood, wherever undisciplined youths pass and repass through crowded streets to places of instruction, and this is one, among many reasons, why the attempt to establish institutions in imitation of the ancient Universities of Cambridge or Oxford, has almost always proved an egregious failure. At a real University, habits of discipline and subordination are not only inculcated and enforced within the walls of each college, but due care is taken, that no evasion of those habits can be effected without incurring, on detection, penalties, more or less severe, so long as the student dwells within the precincts of the town.

Mr. Ricks, to whom have been assigned the City, Chelsea, Finsbury, Marylebone, Westminster, and part of Lambeth:—a district comprising 79 schools, with a total number of 52,300 scholars on the books, at the close of 1877, speaks of an average attendance of 24,744 at the 9 a.m. roll-call, and of 39,886 at 2 p.m.; out of 41,171. Complaints are continually made to him by teachers, not only of the apathy, but of the positive opposition of the parents, and "to overcome this" they allege "is a hopeless task." The staff in this district comprises 551 adult and 585 pupil teachers and candidates.

Many of the assistants are described as "mere machines

for imparting so much instruction at so much per month." The inspector condemns, and upon reasonable grounds, the system of promotion, adopted with regard to the teachers; while in several schools, there is plenty of school method, but "very little *real teaching*. In the majority, the teaching is meagre, formal and without interest. On the whole, the instruction may fairly be said to be a preparation to pass certain examinations according to definite methods. Hence a change in the examiner, produces a tolerably wide-spread consternation." The work of the school is entirely governed by the expected examination. "If the inspector be content with mere mechanical arithmetic, so is the teacher: if, on the contrary, the inspector asks for intelligence, in the shape of little problems; arithmetic is much better taught; if fluent reading is sufficient, little trouble is taken to get intelligent reading; and so of the class and specific subjects, it is not, which is the best or most suitable subject to quicken the interest and awaken the intelligence or which is most suitable to the capacities of children; but rather which does the inspector prefer."

Attention is further drawn to another great and almost universal defect, in the system. Much of the teaching is imparted by question and answer, the questions—addressed to the class as a whole—being framed, so that the answers may lead to some new illustration. The only use of such questions being to set *all* the children thinking, the teacher should then select some one or more children to answer. This, it seems, is just what is *not* done. The question is put, a few clever children answer, and the rest follow like so many parrots. Sometimes the teacher exclaims after putting the question—"Now hands up, all who know this," but the correct reply having been given by some 5 or 6 sharp children out of 60, "a shower of hands attests the fact that the answer is known." All this—Mr. Ricks justly observes—"is pure waste of time. It is a practice which gives the idle and inattentive, every facility for

being idle and inattentive ; it encourages idleness." He points out, moreover, that under the existing system, the clever children do not get a fair share of teaching. "A large number of scholars, could pass the 6 standards in much less than 6 years, many in 4 years, but they are purposely kept back in order to earn the whole grant ! A scholar, passing in one standard, every year for 6 years, earns for the teachers £3 12s. ; if he passes in 4 years, he only earns £2 8s. Not only, therefore, is there no inducement offered to the teacher, to give a fair share of attention to the clever children, but he has encouragement of the strongest and most positive kind, to give his whole time to the dullards and dunces." Further on he states, with respect to the reading :—"I occasionally find a whole class of children, mechanically word-perfect, but understanding very little of the ideas intended to be conveyed by the words and sentences," in like manner, in relation to "class subjects." A great fault is committed in placing too much reliance on text-books, and appealing too little to the understanding. "Definitions are repeated glibly enough, but the *words of the definition* are seldom understood." Grammar too, it is found, is not made to serve any practical purpose in the use of the language.

With all this, it cannot be affirmed that the teaching is not absurdly pretentious, when it is gravely announced that literature is taught in 54 departments, domestic economy in 40, animal physiology in 27, physical geography in 16, French in 5, mathematics in 2, botany in 2, and Latin in 8 ! Let the reader imagine infants of 7 or 9 gravely receiving instruction in Belles Lettres, animal physiology, or botany !

The inspector admits that "the teaching in domestic economy even, is too ambitious. We get learned lessons on food stuffs :—albumen, fibrine, caseine, &c.," and these to babies who avowedly are unable to overcome the difficulties of the spelling-class ! At the same time, much of the teaching

is altogether—if not actually misleading, at least inexact. For instance, in order that an embryo costermonger, scarcely higher than the table, may comprehend what is meant by “the breath;” he is taught, that he “breathes *in* oxygen and breathes *out* carbonic acid, and that carbonic acid is poisonous.” This is usually the extent of the information imparted, under this head.

Nothing is said of the minute proportion of carbonic acid in exhaled air, which admits of its being respired again and without material inconvenience. No mention is made of the detriment to health from living in close rooms, where all admission of fresh air is carefully excluded, “or that the gas or candles we burn, all consume the same vital oxygen we consume, and give rise to the same poisonous gas that we make.” Much less do we learn anything of that beautiful adjustment in Nature, whereby the waste poisonous gas from our lungs, serves as nutriment for plants; the plants, while assimilating the carbon of the gas, returning the oxygen to the atmosphere to support animal life. Mr. Ricks adds, sensibly enough, that he would like to see lessons in domestic economy that would lead “to the cleansing of drains, would point out the evils of keeping rotting refuse in dustbins, close to windows; to the treatment of simple diseases, to the cure of cuts, burns or colds, and any other simple subjects which have to do with health in the house.” What can be more absurd, in dealing with children of tender years, than to neglect the useful and practical, for what is merely theoretical and must be perfectly unintelligible?

Mr. M. Williams superintends the proceedings of 73 separately-managed Board schools; 35 in Hackney and 38 in Tower Hamlets districts—steeped in the mire of the grossest ignorance, and undoubtedly as much as any in need of improvement and of intellectual elevation. He writes that:—“the total number of school places, will soon amount to 60,750.

The names on the books are 59,914, while the average percentage of attendances is rather more than 81."

The staff of teachers comprises 1,279 persons. Of the female assistants a "large proportion," we are told, "are inferior in attainments, and have little skill as disciplinarians," an average female assistant teacher, comparing unfavourably in nearly every respect with an average male assistant." It not unfrequently happens "that aptitude for teaching, discovers itself in a boy or girl of very meagre attainments, just as, on the other hand, it often occurs that a clever boy or girl has little or no skill as a teacher, and is of very little use in a school."

The experience of Mr. Ricks is confirmed by that of Mr. Williams as regards Literature, Animal Physiology, Physical Geography, French, Botany, Mechanics, Mathematics, and Domestic Economy.

He deprecates the want of thoroughness; of proper method, adding that the instruction constantly degenerates into thoughtless cram. Little or no use is made of sketches on the black-board, of models or diagrams, though the storekeeper has an abundant supply of both. The students of Belles Lettres—it is edifying to contemplate mentally, a Hackney crossing-sweeper or a Tower Hamlet shoeblack, thus dignified—are urged to commit to memory, selected passages from standard authors, which Mr. Williams assures us are altogether beyond their comprehension. The consequence is, that although they may know every line by rote, including the explanatory foot-notes, they are, for the most part, utterly at fault, if questioned as to the meaning of any of the sentences they may have recited glibly enough! In schools in the poorest neighbourhoods Milton's "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are constantly taken as the most appropriate subjects for that class of ragged urchin to learn by heart, whose greatest delight is to turn rapid somersaults, for halfpence, as they run by the side of the Tottenham

omnibuses ! One is not disposed to entertain a very exalted notion of the aptitude for teaching, even of a head master, who selects the above celebrated classic odes, "full as they are of poetic touches and literary excellences," for the special enlightenment of the street Arabs of East Smithfield. Most people will cordially agree with Mr. Williams "that it is only an exceptionally skilful and judicious teacher who can make the lesson in English literature serve the true purposes of education," especially such education as the School Board ought to endeavour to aim at.

In order fully to demonstrate the worthlessness of the present system of teaching, no further test is wanted than that afforded by putting a few questions to any of the children in a different form from that given in the text-books. Frequently, says Mr. Williams, has he "sorely puzzled very intelligent children over the fragments of a stereotyped definition. A proper noun is invariably said to be the name of a particular person or place—it would be surely more correct to say, that it is the particular name of a person or place; and a child who comes to school late, or with dirty hands or unkempt hair, will also be invariably described as one who is not a particular person, and yet his name is a *proper* name or noun. Here, then, a puzzle presents itself to the child, which should at once be cleared up. I find no fault with the word particular, ambiguous though it be; but I maintain, that the definition containing it, should not be committed to memory by the children until its ambiguity has been pointed out and its technical meaning made clear. A definition cannot be of great practical use to children, unless the meaning of its terms is clearly grasped by them." Many of the definitions in common use in Board schools are extremely faulty. "A proper noun"—for instance—the child is taught to repeat—"is a word that begins with a capital letter. A verb is a word which tells us what we do, or what is done to us, or it is a word which

enables us to make an assertion." It would certainly be preferable to say, that it is a word without which an assertion cannot be made.

There are, it seems, many of the so-called instructors who lecture too much and teach too little—who assume that their audiences know more than they do. Their lessons are too long and cover too much ground. The matter is not well selected, the work is ill divided and the details are confused.

Mr. Williams concludes his reports with a well-considered and excellent syllabus, setting forth the chief characteristics and requirements of efficient infants' schools. It is impossible to take exception to his recommendations. The inevitable enquiry on the part of any man of ordinary apprehension will naturally be, in the name of all that is reasonable, what possible need could there be for a Board estimated to cost next year, in one way or another, nearly £1,000 a week and squandering millions without stint, to carry out these and similar suggestions?

There were Voluntary Schools enough, as has been already shown, throughout the length and breadth of the land; all that was required, if the management or the discipline were defective, was to take measures to amend them. All who were desirous of the "priceless boon," could obtain it on very easy terms, those who are now compulsorily driven to sit for four or five hours on the benches of the Board school, till they have attained the age of thirteen, listening to dull lectures on domestic economy or animal physiology when they might have been acquiring some useful handicraft whereby they could have secured an honest and independent livelihood, naturally inquire "What good have we got by all these years spent in learning to read and write? Reading and writing won't find us in bread and cheese—we've got now to learn a trade and it will take a good many more years before we can earn our salt at that. How are we to live in the meantime?"

The first evil result of the injudicious Legislative Act of 1870, was speedily discernible in the positive injury it inflicted on existing schools. Most of the Voluntary Schools, especially those under the immediate supervision of the clergy, were silently and efficiently doing really good and useful work, and were well attended by children for the most part decently clad and orderly in their behaviour. Many of these were drawn away, attracted by the cheapness of the rival school. Their habits, demeanour and language soon underwent a change for the worse.

The difference between the operations of the Voluntary and the Board Schools is very remarkable, and is at once perceptible even to a casual observer. One reason probably is, the inculcation in the former case, of religious tenets as the foundation of obedience and discipline and order, both in and out of school hours; while in the other there is an utter absence of the smallest symptom of anything of the kind, amongst the dirty, foul-mouthed little roughs, attending the Board Schools. This is manifest enough during the time allowed for relaxation, when their language—in the metropolitan districts more especially—is chiefly compounded of oaths, and expletives and ribald jests, that could not be exceeded in filthiness, had the youthful utterers, passed their lives in the lowest purlieus of St. Giles's or Billingsgate.

An able and a well-informed writer reverting to the deadly conflict now being waged against the admirably-conducted and efficient Voluntary Schools, says very truly:—

“It is becoming increasingly obvious that, either by legislation or by the more stringent action of the Educational Department, decisive measures must be taken to restrain the mischievous policy of the School Board, towards all the elementary schools outside the rate system. A vast amount of mischief has already been accomplished by the supersession of efficient voluntary schools which have been ruined by the wasteful and unfair competition of the Boards. As regards the ragged schools, it is a question whether the London Board will ever be able to repair the mischief it has accomplished. What, it is important to ask, has become of the 21,000 children who have been turned adrift? Are they to be found in the Board schools? Sir Charles Reel would have us

accept this conclusion as regards a considerable proportion of them. 'Every child transferred to us,' he says, 'from 12,000 to 15,000, has a place in some efficient school.' But is Sir Charles quite sure that these 12,000 or 15,000 are really the children who were in the ragged schools? They were the unkempt, unwashed, shoeless little pariahs of the street. Are they to be found in the highly-respectable and select class-rooms of the Board schools? We think not. The Board has no great liking for such unsavoury pupils, and has a habit of shunting them into industrial schools and training ships. We do not say this without sufficient warrant. We have before us a copy of the speech with which Sir Charles Reed opened the first meeting of the Board after the autumn recess. In reviewing the labours of the past year, Sir Charles considered it a matter for congratulation that, in spite of the difficulties inseparable from such a work, the Board had succeeded in getting hold of 3,986 children of this class, and went on to say, that of this number 2,042 had been sent to industrial schools, 380 to training ships, and the rest to homes and refuges. How do these figures tally with the assumption that '12,000 or 15,000' of this class of children have been cared for by the Board? According to Lord Shaftesbury there are 21,000 children to be accounted for. Sir Charles Reed now tells us that 12,000 or 15,000 have places in efficient schools; yet so recently as October last he admitted that fewer than 4,000 had been brought under instruction. It would be a crowning proof of the mischievous character of the policy adopted by the Board towards the ragged Schools if it should turn out that of the 21,000 sent adrift at least 17,000 are receiving no education or moral training whatever. This dead set at the ragged schools is part of a much larger question—the attitude of the Boards in administering the Act of 1870 towards the voluntary schools generally. The Act was accepted by the Conservatives and the Church party as a compromise by which, in consideration of certain concessions exacted from the supporters of the denominational schools, the latter were to be incorporated into the new national system, and to be placed upon a footing of exact equality with the Board schools. It is, nevertheless, true that the Act is now being administered in a spirit of direct hostility to the voluntary schools. The Boards are endeavouring to drive them out of the field, and there seems to be no efficient power in the Education Department to put a check upon their perverse application of the Act. Mr. Francis Sharp Powell drew attention to the gravity of this question in his able address at the meeting of the Calverley Church Institute. Churchmen and the Conservative party are quite determined that the education of the country shall not pass into the hands of the Boards and the secular party, and they are equally resolved that the intention of the Act shall not be ignored or contravened in the administration of it. They ask for no favour for the voluntary schools. They appeal to the declarations of the late Government and the language of the Act in proof of their contention that Parliament never contemplated the extinction of those schools, but desired that they should be placed on a footing of exact equality with the Board schools. We believe that Mr. Powell has accurately expressed the opinion of the great majority of the Conservative and Church party. There is a strong feeling that they have a right to look to the Government in this matter. They do not ask for legislation contrary to the principle and intention of the Act. They insist that the present administration of it is

not in harmony with the plainly-understood intention of the legislature in passing it, and they press, not without reason, for the adoption of measures which will give effect to the mind of Parliament by placing the two systems on a footing of substantial equality."

The Education Act of 1870 has undoubtedly had a most unfavourable effect upon the Voluntary Schools of the country. All who really wished the poorer classes of the community to be educated, were willing to help the Voluntary Schools; their supporters are now chiefly to be found amongst those who value definite religious teaching. People who care nothing about such teaching, withhold their subscriptions wherever School Boards exist; and where there are as yet no School Boards, a feeling has been introduced which had no previous existence. Since "the law compels all ratepayers to contribute to maintain schools; why, say they, should the burden any longer fall upon the few?" Where the many are indifferent or selfish, and the few, attach little value to the inculcation of Christianity, School Boards are set up.

It speaks well for the faith and energy of school managers that, in spite of heavy discouragements, they should so nobly have held their ground. Not four per cent. of the Church Schools have been surrendered, whilst the actual school accommodation provided by the Church is very greatly in excess of what it was in 1870. "To have succeeded in accomplishing this, in the face of the profuse expenditure on Board Schools, and the diminished number of supporters of Voluntary Schools, is a great thing. But the difficulty arising from these causes is not the only trial which managers have had to face. The cost of maintaining schools has greatly increased. School Boards have not only deprived Voluntary Schools of many of their helpers, but they have also compelled managers to raise larger sums annually. In some cases this difficulty has been surmounted by increased liberality, so that in fact the sum annually contributed for the sustentation of Church Schools is greatly in excess of what it was a few years

ago. But if dependence had been placed wholly upon such help, many of our schools would have succumbed. It so happens that the largest amount of Elementary School accommodation is required, where the population of the working classes is at a maximum, and that of the wealthy at a minimum. In such localities, the school fees have been raised, with the happiest effect; and many a school which lived with difficulty upon low fees and liberal subscriptions, is now comfortably sustained by high fees and small subscriptions. The schools have in every way been improved by the change; and the work they do for the Church, as well as for Education, is much greater than it was. It is to be regretted that the Church should not care *directly*, as she previously did, for the poorest of the people, who especially need her sympathy and help. But it may be doubted, whether *indirectly* her influence upon the poorest, may not even be increased by the present plan of procedure.

“So far, then, as existing schools are concerned, we see no great cause for alarm. The first shock has been endured, without great loss or injury. We are convinced that the existing Voluntary Schools can be upheld, if the managers will not shrink from the trouble of doing their part well. But with regard to the *extension* of our schools, we are compelled to speak with hesitation. We still find with pleasure that new Church Schools are being built. But the ability to build schools diminishes, as the need for them increases. We cannot, therefore, wonder that those who are responsible, seek to sustain what they have, and shrink from adding to their liabilities. It would demand a great effort to build the schools required. It is not to be wondered at, that people will not make this effort, when, after it is accomplished, there must still be the annually-recurring effort to support them. And so Board Schools in such neighbourhoods become inevitable.”

Dr. Rigg, the head of a Wesleyan training college at

Westminster, writing in the *Contemporary Review* on the subject of Board Schools, very properly observes that:—

“The attempt to force Board schools upon the population of the country, even where they are not required, has doubtless been pushed very far in certain localities. Such attempts are in every way oppressive and evil. They are equally tyrannical and wasteful; equally opposed to liberty and to every principle of statesmanlike economy. As yet, however, the movement in this direction, however far it may have been pushed here and there, has, on the whole, signally failed. Much mischief as may have been done in some spots, the natural instincts of the free people of England have thus far defeated, on the broad scale, the despotic will and counsel of our obdurate modern theorists. As yet, Board schools constitute but a small fraction of the educational apparatus of the country, nor do they seem likely hereafter to sum up to more than a moderate proportion. Their value and influence, indeed, where they have been well and wisely placed and organized, are, and will increasingly be, much greater in proportion than their mere number or bulk; as the value and influence of School Boards, again, will be out of all proportion greater and wider than might be inferred from the mere number of Board schools. But still it is a very notable point, and one altogether pertinent to the present discussion, that the educational work actually done in Board schools is as yet comparatively so small. When we are informed that more than half of the population of England is under School Boards, and that in this proportion are included nearly all the towns in the country of any considerable size, and the chief manufacturing populations, whether resident in towns or in villages, we are apt to infer that the number of Board schools must be in a ratio somewhat corresponding to the territorial extent and influence of School Boards, and that a very large share of the children of the country must be in these schools. The facts, however, are otherwise. In schools inspected during the year 1876 the number of children in average attendance at all public elementary schools was 1,984,573, while the number in average attendance at Board schools was only 333,234, being one-sixth of the whole. And yet the Boards have been busily at work for six years, and many of them have nearly finished their task of supplying deficiencies.”

Dr. Rigg sums up his plan for the future regulation of education thus:—

“In some such way as I have now indicated, I venture to hope that the whole question of national education may be solved. The National Council of Education, universally representative as it would be, would, without any direct or compulsory power of law, give suggestion, initiation, impulse, and, to a large extent, regulation to education of every grade, by means of schools of every class. So far as elementary education is concerned, there would, under the influence of natural law, come to be a sort of ascending scale of elementary schools, in harmony with the social diversities and educational wants of the population in its various classes. There would be teachers who had never been at college, but nevertheless had been well trained as pupil-teachers and assistants, and had passed a proper examination; these, as a less expensive but

still competent class of purely elementary teachers, would fill the lowest class of sound but rudimentary schools, in villages and in certain parts of towns for certain classes of the population. These would be cheap, but yet sound and effective, teachers. There would be a multitude of female teachers of this description, in village schools, doing excellent service at a low cost. Such teachers would furnish an education within the reach of the really poor, if they were frugal and industrious. Above these there would be all gradations of college-trained teachers, able not only to teach the elements after the best style, and to train pupil-teachers in the best way, but to carry education beyond the margin which has been supposed to divide primary from secondary instruction. There would thus be a complete graduation of schools, each kind melting into the one next to it, with no gap, no arbitrary line, no prejudiced class. The supply and the demand would be self-adjusting."

The following passage should be laid to heart by those who are continually praising the American system of education, and decrying that given in our own elementary Voluntary Schools:—

"To this country, and in particular our training-colleges, American educationists repair, that they may study our principles and methods; and they are by no means slow or stinted in acknowledging their obligations to us. Throughout the Continent, also, our principles and methods are recognised as of the highest value. What are often imagined by Englishmen, who have never studied the subject at home, to be German improvements and discoveries, have, for the most part, long been familiarly known to English educationists, at least within the zone of our training colleges and trained teachers; and students of educational science alike from Russia and from Italy, find in this country, rather than anywhere else, their best models of school discipline and instruction. Infant training, indeed, is a speciality of this country; here it originated, and here alone has it been matured and perfected. From this country it has spread to the United States. Infant schools in Germany are the recent luxury of the better classes, not an organic element of the national system of education; and the principles so ingeniously and effectually worked up by Fröbel into the Kindergarten system, have found in this country their congenial home and their most extensive sphere of development."

Hitherto, reference has been made chiefly to the Metropolitan Board, its extravagance and inefficiency. If, however, any one cares to pursue the subject further, and to wade through the two ponderous and uninviting volumes, containing the report of the "Committee of the Council on Education in England and Wales" for the year 1876, and issued December, 1877, he will find that the same defects and shortcomings, to which attention has already been called, exist in a greater or less degree all over the kingdom.

Beginning with the first volume, comprising 928 closely-printed pages, filled to a large extent with elaborate statistical tables, the most interesting portion perhaps, is that giving the general reports for the past twelve months of the several inspectors, who, it appears, in the year ending 31st August, 1876, visited 14,273 schools, affording accommodation for 3,426,318 children. Each school furnishes 8 square feet of space to every child, so that if the superficial area of each of the schools in the kingdom were staked out contiguously upon a plain, the entire surface enclosed would amount to no less than 630 statute acres!

The inspectors visited, besides, 602 schools, affording instruction to 36,088 scholars. These places of instruction do not happen to fulfil the conditions on which annual grants are made. They therefore obtain no assistance from Government. We are presented also with a list of School Boards "recommended for loans from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, with the amounts of such loans, to the 31st March, 1877."

In this list, Anglesea figures for £5,355, Llanfairmatha-farneithaf for £580 (or nearly £25 a letter, for each letter in its euphonious name!), Reading gets £16,703, Llanelly £12,086 15s., Ruabon £12,323 11s., Derby £11,216 13s. 8d., Fleage £19,770, Devonport £15,424, Exeter £16,207 10s. 4d., Plymouth £18,263, Westham in Essex £31,339 1s., Merthyr £27,262 12s., Ryde £68,390 17s., Liverpool £141,115 11s. 5d., Manchester £63,147 15s., &c. The School Board for London obtains £2,727,521 os. 10d. The reader will be amazed to find that these *loans* amount to no less than seven millions six hundred and eighty-six pounds one shilling and fivepence, a sum about equivalent to that lately squandered upon another gigantic legislative blunder, whereby the sewage of London is being gradually but steadily converted into an effectual obstruction, to all navigation of the Thames! The above payments too, be it remembered, are still only first instalments of the

entire cost of this stupendous job. No account is rendered in this blue book of the vast sums wrung from the poorest of the industrial classes in the shape of fivepenny, sixpenny and eightpenny rates, and amounting already to several millions, the total whereof will inevitably be greatly augmented, each successive year, as the fancied wants of the clamorous hosts of pauper children increase; if indeed the country does not speedily shake off its apathy and stop the wasteful proceedings of those who have brought about this senseless "Education Craze."

Let us put the case of a landowner, already burdened with a heavy debt, which it is hopeless for him ever to think of discharging, while his efforts to pay the interest, materially cripple his resources. Nevertheless, one day he becomes suddenly impressed with a conviction that there is not a sufficient number of schools upon his property. Thereupon he forthwith determines to borrow many thousands at a high rate of interest, in order to build and endow liberally additional schools. When completed, he is astonished and mortified to find that the people, for whose special and supposed benefit he had been so zealously toiling and adding to his encumbrances, cared little for the "priceless boon" proffered to them, and resorted to all sorts of expedients for absenting themselves from the new places of instruction, though they had been rendered in every way attractive, and though provided, regardless of expense, with teachers of the highest ability. To escape his present dilemma, he hits upon the ingenious device of fining everybody 5s. who won't come to be taught. But as the law cannot be set in motion without money, he has to dip his hand into his pocket again, pretty frequently, to pay his attorney's charges, and these he finds run up to a sum that would have kept half a score of the old-fashioned, well-managed voluntary schools upon his property, in the most efficient order.

Conduct such as this, in an ordinary individual, would not

only sooner or later, bring him to the verge of bankruptcy, but might probably cause him, ere long to be locked up by the Chancellor. Yet in what respect does it differ from that of the Legislature in 1870, under the auspices of that respectable but opinionated, but somewhat wrongheaded firm, Messrs. Gladstone, Lowe, Forster and Co.?

Mr. Alington, whose district comprises 247 schools, divided into 382 departments, having visited 283, containing 27,626 children, besides 12 departments in the east of London containing 2,999 children, does not give a hopeful account generally of the results of arithmetical instruction. He cites the case of a school, where out of 21 girls, one only, was able to work 2 of the 4 following very simple sums, and to obtain a pass.

1. Divide 1,195,250 by 175.
2. Add together £37 19s. 6½d., 11½d., £8 15s. 6½d., £469 8s. 10½d., £17, and £9 13s. 11½d.
3. From £100,000 take £1,076 12s. 9½d.
4. The sum of £2,698 is left to each of 9 persons: what is the total amount left?

“It is only necessary,” says Mr. Alington, “to read the single answer received to the last question, ‘Please sir, they have nothing left,’ to understand the kind of teaching, upon which twelve months had been so unprofitably spent. It is a teaching which is purely mechanical, which *prepares for a certain form of examination, is content with a minimum of attainments, and is utterly worthless.*”

It is unnecessary to add one word of comment to the sweeping condemnation of one of the ablest and most experienced of the School Inspectors. His opinion is corroborated, again and again, by all who have had similar opportunities of forming a correct judgment. All attempts to teach specific subjects seem to be attended with failure. Very few of those who are most accurate in their replies, reach the

standard of "a pass." Very few are accurate, and the papers of the majority are simply valueless. What for instance can have been the use of attempting to teach physical geography to a boy, who at the end of an entire year, gives, when asked to distinguish between constant and periodical winds, the answer:—"Hurricanes, gales, tempests, and a zephyr?" The master who was teaching him must have known that in this particular case a specific subject, at any rate, involved a pure waste of time.

Unfortunately however these cases are not solitary but exist in tens of thousands. "The teacher," says Mr. Arnold (another inspector), "should be fettered as little as possible, and our codes tend to fetter him too much." Any one of ordinary sense could not but think so too, if he but took the trouble to wade through the Acts of 1870 and 1876 together with the 112 pages of minutely-printed orders and instructions formed on the Acts, codes, new codes, minutes and instructions arising from the codes, &c., &c. Many individuals would probably rise from the perplexing perusal of this mass of matter in that mental state, which not unfrequently culminates in permanent residence at Hanwell. Mr. Arnold makes a sensible remark on the spelling reform. "English spelling has no doubt great irregularities. Its acquisition is exceptionally difficult to an adult foreigner on that account. It is not however clear to me, that it can thence be inferred, or that experience proves, that it is also, therefore, exceptionally difficult to an English child. At any rate, the English nation, will not be induced, in the hopes of making it easier, to take to writing, *Leed us not inter temtashon*. Whatever changes are made, will certainly not be made with the view of rendering spelling easier for children. They will be made, because certain things in our present spelling are irrational."

Later on, he speaks of a deficiency of culture, in feeling, taste and perception, alike in scholars and teachers, and he

instances in proof of this—the case of second year students in training colleges, some of whom thought proper to write such paraphrases as the following, of Shakespeare's "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased?" :—

1. "Doctor, can you fulfil the duties of your profession in curing a woman who is distracted? 2. Can you not wait upon the lunatic?" (!) A youth, who had, in a training college, been studying *Macbeth*, for two years, at his examination, being called upon to paraphrase the celebrated passage :—

"Now witchcraft celebrates

Pale Hecate's offerings; and withered murder,

Alarum'd by his sentinel the wolf,

Whose howl 's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace

With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design

Moves like a ghost,"

wrote as follows :—"The witches who are under the control of Hecate, and who love the darkness because their designs are best accomplished then, have assembled at their meeting place with no other protection than a wolf for their sentinel, and by whose roar they know when their enemy Tarquin is approaching them." (!)

Mr. Baily, in reporting upon the Yorkshire schools, takes occasion to mention, that Bradford has opened a large number of schools, built at great expense, and with every advantage of architectural ornament, the Bradford people, it seems, "having plenty of money and liking to spend it, in the decoration of their town, the rapid progress of which is a just source of pride to its inhabitants." He is afraid, however, "that some magnificent schools, built by the Bradford School Board are the worst of all, for the purposes of teaching. (!) They are so spacious and lofty, that the teacher's voice can hardly be heard by the class, and yet by a curious inconsistency, the noise of a falling slate is echoed about, with startling distinctness."

Most of the Yorkshire schools now take up "class sub-

jects." Formerly grammar was taught preferably to geography. This the inspector thinks is a disadvantage, because the grammar learnt is very limited, and the children can hardly be expected either to write or speak correctly, any the more by reason of the scraps of grammar they may have picked up, and yet, unless it has this effect, of what utility is it? It is more than doubtful, whether the geography as taught in these schools, is of the least practical use. The walls of many schoolrooms are hung with large, brightly-coloured maps, in the apparent expectation, that by sitting before them for years, the children will imbibe all the knowledge that can be imparted from that source. It seems to be altogether overlooked, that considerable previous mental training is needed, in order to understand the purport of the information derivable from a map. It may be safely affirmed that 90 school children out of a hundred have no more idea of the use of a map, than they would have of a sextant or of a theodolite. The definitions in a geographical text-book, taken home and committed to memory, are wholly worthless. "Ask a class," says Mr. Baily, "what is an island? You are very sure to get, with parrot-like accuracy, the stereotyped reply, 'An island is a portion of land entirely surrounded by water.' But there is a humiliating confession of ignorance, if the interrogatories be pushed further and the children be asked what does the word 'portion' or the word 'surrounded' mean?"

To the question "What is a mountain?" the never-failing definition is elicited, in any school, "A mountain is a portion of land elevated above the surrounding country, and reaching a height of not less than 1,000 feet above the level of the sea." "They frequently break down," says Mr. Baily, "in the middle of this long sentence, and begin again at the beginning, just as if they were repeating a piece of poetry." To another Inspector, who asked a class, "What are mountains and rivers?" one girl, who had attended regularly for three years, replied,

"Mountains in some parts of the world are very useful. In Africa, for instance, they shoot out great quantities of gold." Another young lady expressed a less favourable opinion of rivers. She thought them "all very well in some countries where they had no rain, but elsewhere she considered them of little use." The words of course convey no meaning whatever, any more than that the earth is an "oblate spheroid," a fact the children always confidently affirm, though in all probability neither they nor their instructor, could explain the term if their lives depended on giving a correct solution. Again, ask a class—"When a puddle has dried up what has become of the water?" the chances are that some dozen voices will exclaim "It has evaporated;" or "What is the cause of mist?" the answer will pretty certainly be in the words of the text-books, "The condensation of vapour." But extend the inquiry and require a definition of the words "evaporated," "condensation," or "vapour," and an appalling silence will ensue. Imagine little children of 8 or 9 years committing to memory or gravely repeating such a passage as this:—"Carbonic acid is one of the invisible substances of the atmosphere, of which, though it forms no more than four parts in every ten thousand, yet it constitutes an important ingredient."

It would take at least a couple of years' preliminary initiation into the rudiments of chemistry before the puzzled infantine brain would have a chance of attaching significance to the words.

Mr. Palmer, referring to his district, comprising the eight poor-law unions of Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud, Cirencester, Northleach, Stow-on-the-Wold, Winchcombe, and Tewkesbury, with a population exceeding 200,000, makes allusion to the contributions paid by the children for their schooling, and says that it is a rare thing for even a small part of a boys' school to pay as much as 6d. per week. The whole

school never does. Yet even in this lowly grade "social differences" are as much (perhaps even more strongly) insisted upon, in the lower classes, as in the middle and upper. Whilst the sons of the professional man may find themselves side by side with those of the poor, in the public school, the farmer will not let his daughters (nor his sons except in their earliest years) sit beside the children of his labourers in the public elementary school. In like manner the well-to-do mechanic shrinks from the contact of his children with the rougher and worse-clad offspring of costermongers and scavengers. "Respectability" is far more apparent than the desire for education. This is rather a humiliating avowal, and forcibly demonstrates the futility of the supposed religious teaching of the community. The universal profession of Christianity is, it would seem, like the greater part of the School Board teaching, a delusion and a sham. The complaint is everywhere heard, on the part of the clergy as well as of the resident landowners, who have sedulously and attentively watched the working of the whole system throughout the country, that "the people are being over-educated, while, as a matter of fact, they are taught comparatively nothing." Nothing is more certain than that the urchins who may have mastered the alphabet and contrived to scrawl "an indifferent foot" rather than a tolerable hand, or who have just obtained "a pass" in physical geography, literature or domestic economy, at the same time that they know really nothing at all of any practical use relative to one of the subjects, give themselves as many conceited airs and treat their parents with as much insolence as if, forsooth, they were altogether of an inferior race, and were unworthy of the smallest consideration. In the memorable words of the *Times*, already cited, "the public elementary scholar now emerges, from the six standards, a mere useless pedant, his head filled with worthless stuff, and without either the will or the power to turn it to account."

Jack now-a-days thinks himself just as good as his master, if not a good deal better. "Why then," he exclaims, "should I take orders from any one? I acknowledge no master, though I may occasionally have recourse to an employer."

As for the girls, the scraps of nonsense they have gleaned at school, the evil associates they have picked up going to and fro, the trashy penny romances they have subsequently devoured, have combined to fill their heads with such notions of self-sufficiency and foolish pride, that they now almost universally refuse to go out into domestic service, unless indeed situations are offered them "where nothing menial is required."

The Rev. G. P. Merrick, the chaplain of the House of Correction at Westminster, gives important evidence on this head. Allusion "to those prisoners, who are wrongly termed unfortunates," leads him to say that very frequently, the respectability of domestic service, and the dignity of home labour have been despised, and the idleness and debauchery of a life "on the streets" preferred.

A disposition to luxury and a repugnance to moral and physical restraint seem to prevail, to an alarming extent among the young women of what are called the "lower classes."

The visiting justices confirm this opinion and give some appalling statistics of the increasing amount of drunkenness or offences arising therefrom, still filling as they do, nearly three-fourths of the cells in the prison. Five days in one week, selected at random, furnished the following figures:—

Wednesday, 26 out of 28 cases, were the result of drunkenness.

Thursday,	24	"	31	"	"
Saturday,	12	"	13	"	"
Monday,	32	"	38	"	"
Tuesday,	32	"	36	"	"

Thousands of girls now-a-days are in fact so highly educated and at the same time so pitifully ignorant, that they

are fit for nothing but to gad about in idleness, offering themselves as the common prey to wayfaring licentiousness, dressed, not in the neat and seemly garb worn by domestics, 50 years ago, but in pretentious array, clumsy caricatures in fact, of the fashions that expired six months previously.

In Gloucestershire the results of examination for certificates under the Factory Acts, are very unsatisfactory. Take one case, where out of 72 children examined, 41 passed in reading, 17 in writing, and only 3 in arithmetic. "Writing," says the examiner, "was very poor on the whole. Few could form or join letters, one could not write at all. The spelling was frightful. It was no uncommon thing to find 20 mistakes in a copy of 8 lines of simple poetry."

Mr. Boyle, reporting upon the schools in West Somersetshire, confirms in many respects the views expressed by other inspectors. He finds the knowledge of geography in general very weak, with very little teaching from the map. If a list of headlands on the east coast of England be asked for, probably the names of those on the west coast will be rattled off by rote, in correct order. If the boys be then asked to point out on the map, Flamborough Head or the North Foreland, they generally fail in doing so. In Somersetshire music would seem to be a failure. The voices are naturally harsh, and it is most exceptional to find the singing of any individual boy or girl striking. "School managers, with good ears for music," says the inspector, "generally and not unwisely, leave the room when the singing begins!"

The Rev. W. Campbell, inspector of the division of Chelsea and Unions of Brentford, Staines and Uxbridge, speaks disparagingly of the teaching of arithmetic in the schools in his district. Mr. Codd states that in Devon and Cornwall the failures in arithmetic are mainly due to the scarcity of good teachers. He adds that the reading is very seldom good. It is too mechanical, and is not even mechanically, what it should

be. *"The village dame with her tattered Bible, is often a more successful teacher of reading than the trained master with his prim series of graduated books."*

Striking evidence this, and from a school inspector too!

"The history presented is very poor stuff, it is only the committing to memory of some cram-book of outline. But what more can you expect? Is the history acquired by boys under fourteen in grade schools any better? What can you possibly impart to a rustic child of eleven or twelve of a tithe of the things of which he reads in history? Ten to one if he knows whether we are living under a king or a queen at the present moment, and he would be quite at a loss to say who was Prime Minister. It seems to me that it would be a far more rational plan to give a child some elementary notions of the institutions under which he lives, how we are governed at the present time, before you introduce him to the history of the past. Many an enthusiastic student of history, who urges its importance, forgets how different is the level from which he surveys mankind, from that to which any young child, especially a rustic one, can be raised, even by the most approved appliances which modern ingenuity has devised."

He states further, that it is very rarely that he gets a paper that is really commendable. Literature appears to be one of the most popular subjects, because it is apparently easier to obtain a pass in that, than in other special subjects. He finds moreover, that not only children, but pupil teachers are utterly ignorant of the names of the authors of the "pieces" they are repeating, and have not the slightest idea as to when they lived. With regard to Latin and French grammar, no child, presented to this inspector, has ever yet shown sufficient proficiency to warrant a pass.

Mr. Fussell, speaking of the district of Finsbury, says, that the condition of the 24 Roman Catholic schools there is far from satisfactory. The attainments of the children are for the most part low. The tables indeed, giving the percentage of passes, prove that they are considerably below the average of the district. This gentleman proceeds to state on the subject of school fees that considerations of domestic policy seem to point distinctly to the absolute justice of insisting that the advantages derived from education, should be acquired as far as possible at the cost and charges of the parents.

“Every child who attends a school receiving annual grants, gets considerably more than his parents pay for. In Voluntary Schools he is chiefly beholden for this to the State and to private benefactors; in Board Schools to the State and to the rates. In either case he shifts on to other shoulders, some portion at least, of the burden, which he ought as far as possible to bear himself, to his own obvious advantage, or to their wrong.” It is of course ridiculous to contend, on the other hand, as some do, that if, for its own purposes, the State forces the parent to send his child to school and to sacrifice, in so doing, the enjoyment of the child’s earnings, in order to insure the welfare and security of the whole community, the parent has a right to demand that the costs of this education shall be fairly borne by the whole body of taxpayers, or more briefly that compulsory education necessarily implies free education.

It is an equally transparent absurdity to endeavour to make believe that a child is immeasurably benefited by being furnished with the means of rising in the social scale and of otherwise bettering his normal condition. People who talk thus, forget that there must of necessity be hewers of wood and drawers of water, ploughmen and scavengers and night-men, and shoeblacks, and crossing-sweepers. If those, who now discharge the duties of those lowly but at the same time indispensable offices, are enabled, by compulsory education, to attain higher and more lucrative posts, others must still be found, to take their places, and if these in turn are carried off and converted into clerks or curates, or barristers, there must after all, be a substratum of unquestionably, most useful individuals to whom instruction in physiology, domestic economy, music or geography would be, if not absolutely a drug, about as valuable, as a satin waistcoat to a grizzly bear, or a pair of white kid gloves and a gold eye-glass to a dustman!

Of one thing we may be quite sure, and that is, that the

inspectors, in preparing their reports, are not at all likely to dwell unduly, upon the dark side of the pictures presented to them, or to call attention unnecessarily to the glaring defects, which they continually encounter, both in the system itself and especially in the style of the examinations in so many different schools.

"The children," says Mr. Johnstone, "are taxed to their utmost, and show no readiness to meet the trial. The examiner is straining to get some crumb of knowledge from them. He sees that they are all upon the border-land of failure, and is perpetually balancing within his mind the question whether they shall sink or swim. The mental process, to say nothing of the physical one, is exhausting. At the close of his work, the inspector leaves, with the inward thought that he has passed, more perhaps, than he ought to have done, but with the consciousness also, that he has dissatisfied the school managers and disappointed expectations. A School Committee does not readily believe a tale of imperfections, and when they see their grant reduced, and receive an unflattering report, they prefer to think that the fault rests, not with their pet school, but with the stranger who is sent to pass judgment upon it."

The tone prevalent in any school, must always necessarily depend upon the character and attainments of the instructors. If we wish to know what is the amount of proficiency on the part of the teachers, the following specimens of answers given in the examinations of certificates, certainly reveal deplorable ignorance on the part of even the successful candidates. The replies, be it remembered too, are all those of *second year* students.

"The sun has an annual motion up and down." "Solar time is the time indicated by the moon." "A meridian is a certain fixed place." "The equator is an imaginary, which passes through the centre of the earth, and passes both ways." "Eclipses of the sun and moon are partial, from the speed at which their bodies are going." "Solar eclipses are annular, because, of the regular and uniform motion of the moon, and when the earth's motion is regular to correspond to it." "The rotundity of the earth, is its movement. The proofs of its rotundity are vegetation—how some trees are slanting

in different parts of the world." "The heavens that we see are hollow, the plain inference from this is, that they inclose a sphere." "Watch closely the heavenly bodies and we find broad belts of pale light, nearly dividing the heavens into two parts; the stars are more numerous in this part, and the reason is, that the earth bulges out."

Similar replies on other "special subjects" might be collected from the papers, submitted to other examiners, sufficient to fill many folio volumes in the course of a year, far more than enough to make the fortune of any comic paper.

A certificated teacher's idea of the extent of England and Wales was "About thirty thousand acres." "It is surrounded on all sides by the North Sea and the Bay of Biscay." "Great Orme's Head is on the Pentland Firth, on the top of it, is John o' Groat's house." "Lake Windermere is in the centre of Dartmoor, in Devonshire." "Guiana is in West Australia." "Nova Scotia is the capital of New Zealand, its principal productions are silk and pearls." "Singapore is a suburb of Bombay." "Cuba is a town in Africa on the Guinea coast, very difficult of access." "Tasmania is a district of Japan, its exports are chiefly codfish and cochineal." "The Papal States comprise the 4 cardinal points, North, South, East, and West." "Spain is about half the size of England, its capital is Gibraltar, its population is six millions, its chief productions are olives and apes." "Portugal is a tributary of Spain, and is separated from it by the Pyrenees, which can only be crossed in winter through the St. Bernard Pass, by means of sledges drawn by reindeer and dogs." "Guatemala is a district in India in which Calcutta is situated. Its chief river is the Hooghly, which abounds with wild boars."

A lad of 14, a pupil teacher, who had had all the advantages derivable from three years' attendance at a Board School of the first class, at the conclusion of his curriculum, was found to entertain the following opinions on English history:—

“William the Conqueror was the son of Alfred the Great, and he had himself two sons, Harold and Canute.” “The Reformation was brought about by Richard I., who was killed at Bosworth by a monk.” “Edward VI. was the eldest son of Queen Elizabeth” (a marvellous instance, it must be presumed, of parthenogenesis !) “and father of Charles I.” “Queen Anne, was the daughter of Mary Queen of Scots, who was known as bloody Mary.” “Queen Anne was the mother of George III.” “The Duke of Marlborough accompanied Lord Anson in his voyage round the world. He conquered the French and the Dutch, and was killed at Waterloo.” “Shakespeare lived in the reign of George III., he discovered America, and was killed by Caliban.”

After the perusal of such specimens of the kind of history that is retailed now-a-days to all comers at 6d. a week, most people will be apt to concur with Lord Beaconsfield, who took occasion, some time since, in allusion to this subject, to observe that :—“We have the advantage of living in an age when people are not remarkable for a superstitious veneration for, or an acquaintance with, history. We cannot spare so much time to the past, as our ancestors did, and I have no doubt, when all the various systems of education now afloat, are matured, and the consequences are practically accomplished, the great body of the nation, will not be acquainted with anything, but the fleeting information of the current hour.”

The date of the fulfilment of the prophecy may not be very far distant. Noodledom has lately enunciated from the blissful realms of its fool's paradise, its intention of instructing the younger classes, in “elementary astronomy.” With certificated teachers, of two years' standing, possessing the knowledge, characterized by such replies as the above, the notions of astronomy, the poor children are likely to bring away with them, will savour more probably of novelty than of strict accuracy.

Common sense would naturally suggest, that if rudimentary instruction is to be gratuitously dispensed, it would be far wiser to confine it to subjects having some bearing upon the future career of the recipient. For instance, the lad, destined in a couple of years for the stable, in the capacity of helper, later on as a groom, to mature ultimately into the full-blown liveried coachman, might advantageously be taught something respecting the nature, and ailments, and treatment of the animals amongst which his life is to be passed. Instead of filling his head with such rubbish—under the ludicrous appellation of astronomy or of geography—as that of which specimens have been offered, it would be of infinitely more service to teach him to put together strap by strap a set of pair-horse harness—to explain to him the construction of a patent axle-tree—how to repair a broken pole—to indoctrinate him with the principles of “draught,”—with the proper way of shoeing horses, cleaning carriages, ventilating stables, &c. In like manner, the boy who is shortly to be apprenticed to the village carpenter, might acquire, with every probability of great future benefit, some “elementary instruction” as to the qualities and nature of different woods, the proper time of year for felling them, the best mode of seasoning and working them—he should be taught the relative properties and characteristics of such metals as he will have to handle and use—the best forms of agricultural implements, and so forth. Men thus appropriately trained, whatever their vocation, might then look back with some satisfaction upon their school days, as not having been altogether thrown away. But no—there is little probability in an age like this, that any suggestions so simple and practical should take root and fructify.

What has above been indicated, however, has been successfully carried out in other countries, and can therefore assuredly be done here at least as well as elsewhere.

Take one out of hundreds of instances that might be adduced.

The *Albergo dei Poveri* at Naples, one of the most magnificent, most wisely conducted, and most successful institutions of the kind in the world, has turned street boys into Paëssellos and Verdis. Here, although the more refined and elevated arts of music, drawing, painting, sculpture, architecture &c., are taught, it is not as accomplishments, to vitiate the character by unclassing the pupil, but some one of these pursuits being carefully selected, according to the aptitude of each individual, it is thenceforward made the subject of his special and serious study, as a future profession. Those boys who are found to have no aspirations or qualifications for anything higher, are taught bookbinding, cabinet-making, tailoring, shoe-making &c.

In England the great object always seems to be, with those who take a prominent part in initiating any considerable public work, to create as much patronage as possible in connection with it, utterly regardless of those who may have to defray the cost of the appointments. In less wealthy countries, the far more rational system is adopted, whenever practicable, of making all institutions self-supporting, and this, of course, is what always ought to be attempted. If an undertaking begun upon this principle at first, upon a small scale, and gradually allowed to expand, stands the test of time, we may be sure that it rests upon a sound basis. In many places on the Continent, there are educational institutions such as the "*Colonie de Mettray*" in France; or that of *Ruysselade*, and various others, in the *Campine* of Belgium, for instance, all of which are entirely self-supporting. The only sound principle that can be safely adopted is, to give no class any higher grade of teaching than they can afford to pay for. If it be thought advisable to extend, under some circumstances, exceptional

help, here and there, it should be done very sparingly, inasmuch as every proceeding of that kind, tends materially not only to lower self-respect, but it acts more harmfully still, by engendering habits of carelessness and indifference, that infallibly manifest themselves on the part of the recipients of any gratuitous boon.

In one school in Mr. Johnstone's district, a novelty at any rate was found to have been introduced. It had been the practice at this academy "to take all the children to a travelling circus, at its periodical visits, and to count their attendance that afternoon, as if they had been in school! They were all still under the superintendence of their teachers, and were imbibing a lesson in gymnastics, was the defence!" After all, the time in all probability was as profitably spent in studying the contortions and somersaults of the clown, as if they had been listening to a Board School travesty on English history!

Mr. Myers, whose district includes the counties of Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Norfolk, finds much to condemn in the present system of pupil teachers. He would wish to see many more weeded out, in the course of their training, than is at present the case. Such a plan might cost a little more at first, but it would be no waste of money in the end. "The true waste, is to permit some sullen stupid lad, to scrape through his examinations as a pupil teacher, to maintain him in a training college, and then to pay him, perhaps, £1,000 of public money in grants, when he has never done one good day's work in his life."

Mr. Oakeley in his report on the schools in the county of Durham, which is blessed with 47 School Boards, has good reason for finding fault with the imperfect and parrot-like way in which geography is taught. "Sometimes after a long string of names (suppose the chief rivers in Europe) has been given, set a boy to start with the Danube, instead of the Volga, or

from the north instead of the south, and he is hopelessly perplexed. Again, knowledge of the (supposed) exact heights of half-a-dozen mountains in the Pennine chain is quite worthless." In a school where the 3rd Standard were being examined in the elementary geography of England, and some of the children had given names of rivers, bays, &c., he found that not even one, out of the entire school, knew what was meant by a river, bay, &c.; the teacher gave a finishing stroke to the opinion formed of his work, by explaining, that since the code assigned for that class the outlines of England, he had not thought it necessary to teach the definitions! Where history had been taken up, Mr. Oakeley found that the answers were in general mere reproductions of part of a primer learnt by rote, containing chiefly names and dates.

Mr. Smith, referring to the Chester district, does not speak very hopefully of the pupil teachers he met with there. While the head teachers are compelled to get more and more work out of them to meet the increasing demands from the school children, their own examinations are getting harder and harder. Many of them, girls especially, show unmistakable signs of overwork.

"Their bodily health is often enfeebled, and their answers, especially in a searching *viva voce* examination, show that they have been crammed with a vast amount of mental food, which they have been utterly unable to assimilate. A pupil teacher of the fourth year told me that one of the reasons which made Magna Charta necessary was 'the increasing deposition of succeeding kings.' She could not the least explain what she meant, and it was some time before I perceived that 'deposition' was put for 'despotism,' and 'succeeding' for 'preceding,' the amended phrase having evidently been taken from some cram-book. And this is just the complaint made by the principals of our training colleges, that candidates come to them, professing to know almost everything and knowing nothing well. It would be better that half the number of subjects should be thoroughly mastered, even if the other half were altogether dropped, rather than they should come with dim, hazy, vague and almost always inaccurate notions of the whole."

Mr. Steele, inspector of the Preston district of Lancashire, gives the following specimen of composition and punctuation from a pupil teacher in her third year:—

"Notes of a lesson on wheat. Wheat is a tall slender plant on the top of each stalk there is an ear of corn. Wheat is sown in the spring after the seed has been sown a few weeks a very little blade appears, similar in appearance to grass this blade grows till it is about a yard high towards autumn this stalk turns yellow," &c.

A more grotesque example still, is that furnished by a pupil teacher in his fifth quarter, who thus describes "the state of England under the Heptarchy":—

"People had three meals a day, breakfast, dinner, and supper. They retired to rest in a state of nudity, and laid on a bed of straw. The Saxons were eminently social, when they drank they would put their tumblers together, very often accompanying it with a kiss, and tell of great exploits of going to the theatres to see the dancing bears."

A Preston boy, read to Mr. Steele, Pope's lines—

"Happy the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound;
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground."

On being asked what was meant by his "native air?" the boy promptly answered, "Why the 'air of his own 'ead, to be sure."

Mr. Synge, reporting on the schools of Norfolk and Suffolk, makes the general remark that the spelling of the children, as well as that of the pupil teachers, is very indifferent. Much progress cannot be said to have been made in arithmetic either, when whole classes of children in the 2nd standard are hopelessly puzzled by such a problem as this: "A farmer has a flock of 1,200 sheep; he buys 17; how many sheep has he then?"

In schools, in which "animal physiology" had been taught, a good deal of time and care having been bestowed on the work, the result nevertheless was very worthless, the knowledge elicited being very inaccurate upon points where inaccurate knowledge is worse than none at all.

Mr. Virtue, in his report on the schools of Sussex and Surrey, mentions, incidentally, that in all instances where he finds that indecent words have been written on the walls of the school or offices, very properly regarding so revolting a practice as evidence of neglect of duty on the part of managers

and teachers, he always recommends a deduction from the grant, adding, "The moral and religious training which the children receive must, indeed, be excellent if its influence will counteract the vicious lessons at all times so easily learnt out of school, and so readily retained, and which are in such cases daily thrust under the notice of the children in the playground."

The same inspector, after the admission examination in July, 1876, revised several hundred papers in geography and history, most of which had been worked by pupil teachers, *at the end of their fifth year*. The answers were very meagre and unintelligent, and, in some cases, so incredibly nonsensical, that he naturally marvelled at the fact of the retention of the pupil teachers so long in their schools. He selects out of many the following choice specimens:—

"Question.—How are the colonies and possessions of England governed? Illustrate your answer by the cases of Ceylon, Victoria, and Malta.

Answer.—(a) Ceylon, belonging to England, is governed distinct from that of the rest of India, and has a government of its own. It consists of a House of Commons and a series of Republics.

(b) Malta is governed by a Shah, independent from the rest of the islands.

Q.—What were the chief provisions of Magna Charta relating to taxation and the administration of justice? Relate the circumstances under which it was forced upon King John.

A.—King John was compelled to sign the Magna Charter, for he found but six nobles round his throne, and Louis quite ready to catch his crown as it fell from his head, so with a smiling face he proceeded to Runnymede, and there he put his signature, but before the ink was dry, he, after the fashion of his father, ground sticks and straw together to

powder between his teeth, as he threw himself down in his passion.

Q.—What were the remote and immediate causes of the Spanish Armada? Write a short account of the expedition.

A.—(a) The Spanish Armada sailed up the Medway and fired at Chatham dockyard, and then resumed its course.

(b) The Spanish Armada took place in the reign of Queen Anne, she married Philip of Spain, who was a very cruel man. The Spanish and the English fought very brave against each other. The English wanted to conquer Spain. Several battles were fought in which hundreds of the English and Spanish were both defeated. They lost some very large ships, and were at a great loss on both sides.”

On another occasion, when an examiner was desirous of testing the proficiency in geography and in Biblical knowledge of some lads who were duly certified as having creditably completed a three years’ curriculum at a Metropolitan Board School, the following were the replies, elicited in writing, to his questions :—

Where is Turkey?

“Turkey is the cappital of Norfork.”

Where is Turin?

“Tureen is the cappital of Chiner, the peepul there, lives on burds nessts and has long tails.”

“Gibberraltar is the principle town of Rooshia.”

What do you know of the patriarch Abraham?

“He was the father of Lot, and ad tew wifes—wun was called Hishmale and the t’other Haygur; he kept wun at home and he turnd the t’other into the dessert, where she became a pillow of salt in the daytime and a pillow of fire at nite.”

What do you know of Joseph?

“Hee wore a koat of many garments. Hee were chief butler to Faro, and told is dreams. Hee married Potiffers dorter, an he led the Gypshans out of bondage, to Kana in

Gallilee, and then fell on his sword and died, in site of the promiss land."

Give the names of the books of the Old Testament.

"Devonshire, Exeter, Littikus, Numbers, Stronomy, Jupiter, Judges, Ruth," &c.

What is a miracle?

"Don't know."

If you saw the sun shining overhead, at midnight, what should you call it?

"The moon."

But if you were *told* it was the sun?

"I should say it was a lie."

But suppose I declared to you that it was the sun?

"I should say you was werry drunk!"

One is occasionally as much amused at these examinations by the stolidity of the examiners, as by the ignorance of their pupils.

"If I prick a ripe cherry with a needle," said a sapient examiner, "or if I pour from a tea-pot, what comes out?" An intelligent lad, sensibly and correctly enough, replied, "Please sir! juice from the cherry and tea from the tea-pot." Examiner—"Oh! no—that is not the proper form of answer, you should have said, *Liquid matter!*"

Another boy, having to give his impressions with regard to Moses, wrote as follows:—

"He was an Eгыpshion. He lived in a hark maid of bull-rushers, and he kep a golden carf, and worshipt braizen snakes, and he het nuthin but kwales and manner for forty year. He was kort by the air of his ed while ridin under the bow of a tree, and he was killed by his son Abslon, as he was a hangin from the bow. His end was pease."

Another boy of three years' standing at a Board school, having been desired to define the difference between a dog and a cow, replied as follows:—

"The dog has five toes on his front feet and four toes on his hind feet and the cow has no toes and cannot bark."

"*Deciduous*, means to *dry up*." "What then, does *desiccate* mean?" "To cut up."

"Lawyers are peace-makers—doctors are men." "Man is the largest being on land."

Give the names of two domestic animals.

To this, another boy replied:—

"Chickens;—their uses are hogs. The cow;—his uses are to give milk, and them two hanimals nurse their young ones."

"What is meant by conscience?" said a schoolmaster to his class. The almost simultaneous reply of half the whole class was, "A hinward monitor"!

An inspector who happened to be present, inquired:— "And what do you understand by a *monitor*?" To this, an intelligent youth, exultingly answered, "A hironclad"!

Here is another characteristic illustration of the parrot-drill of public Board schools, given by a correspondent, who fell in with a schoolboy and offered him a penny if he would tell him the names of all the capitals of Europe. It was done, and with tolerable accuracy. "Now," said the gentleman, "I will give you another penny if you will tell me whether they are animals or vegetables." "Hanimals to be sure"! was the ready and confident answer.

Some girls, who had for a considerable time been attentively receiving instructions in cookery, gave the following satisfactory replies to an examination-paper, containing among other questions "Why is milk the only perfect natural food?" (1.) "Because God made it." (2.) "Because puppies and kittens thrive on it." (3.) "Because it contains everything." (4.) "Because it contains *starch*" (!)

"Most people," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "are aware probably that only a sadly small proportion of the total

number of children receiving elementary education succeed in passing the higher standards ; but few, perhaps, know what is the average amount of intelligence and proficiency among those who do succeed. We will not go so far as to say that the subjoined transcript of Cowper's well-known poem, 'I am monarch of all I survey,' represents the average capacity of boys in the 'fifth standard,' by one of whom it was written (from dictation) at a recent Government inspection, of a North of England Board school, but we do say that such specimens are very far indeed from uncommon, in the higher standards. It seems to show pretty clearly what sort of an inquiry has been made in the four lower standards, into the amount of intelligence brought to bear by elementary school children on those reading lessons, in prose and poetry, which an inspector frequently puts them through, at the rate of about two children per minute:—"I Ham Monac of hall I searve there is none heare my rite to Dispute from the senter. hall round to the Sea I am lorde of the fouls to the Brúte all shoshitude ware are the charmes that sages have sene in thy face beter Dewel in the miste of a larmes than in this moste horibel place. I am how of umity reach i must finish my Jurny a lone never hear the swete music of speach i Start at the sound of my hone the Beasts that rome over the plane my forme with indrifence, see they are so unocnt with men such tamness is shocking to me."

Another highly-certificated youth, affording a bright specimen of what the Metropolitan Board can accomplish in four years, was asked to write from recollection the Lord's Prayer. This is literally what he handed in, interspersed with many smears and blots:—

"Ore farther, chart in evn hallurd bee thine aim, thy kinggum kum thy will be dunn anurth as is in evn. Giv us this day ur daly bred as were furgif um as trippuss agin us. Alleed us nottin totempashun but liver us fromevil, fursine ism kingum unpower & glory forever & ever Haymen."

A correspondent states, that two pupils, each of three years' standing at a "Board school" having been asked: How many commandments are there? The prompt reply of the first boy was, "Seven." What is the seventh commandment?

"Thou shalt honour thy neighbour as thyself, that thy days may be long, in the land which thy Lord thy God giveth thee."

Turning to the other boy, the question put, was—"What is the fourth commandment?" Second boy glibly: "Six days shalt thou commit adultery and do all that thou hast to do, and on the seventh day thou shalt not forget thy neighbour's wife nor his maid nor his hass nor his hocks nor anything as is his."

A boy of the age of fourteen, who had been for a considerable time at a Board School at Leeds, and whom the guardians proposed (last December) to apprentice, could not tell how many halfpence there are in 2s. A girl of the same age, who had been duly instructed in domestic economy, could give no explanation of the relative values of different British coins!

The daughter of a clockmaker, who had admitted, that at her baptism she had "renounced the devil and all his works," was asked, "What do you understand by *his works*?" To this she promptly replied—"Why, his *inside*, to be sure."

What do you understand by "poor in spirit?" "Them as have little gin, left in their bottle."

"In half the first class, in a large permanent school" (says the *Saturday Review* of 18th November, 1876) "which has been open nearly two years, there was not one child who could find out how much money it would take to give 520 children threepence each"! In another large Metropolitan Board school, out of 126 boys who had been in attendance for upwards of two years not one could solve so simple a problem as this:—

If 15lbs. of butter cost £1. 7s. 6d. how much will a hundredweight cost?

“When,” adds the writer in the periodical just cited, “the Inspector proceeds to comment on the quality of the instruction given, he has not a pleasant story to tell. Reading is badly taught, writing is not well taught, and arithmetic is ‘the weakest of the three standard subjects.’ It is only in a very few schools that the reading is accurate, intelligent, and fluent; and yet, if any one of these qualities is absent, the scholar might almost as well have never learned to read at all. In writing, the Inspector complains that there is often nothing that can properly be called teaching. Another Inspector describes the writing lessons as mechanical in the highest degree. The scholars begin to write at a given signal, and write, or are supposed to write, without interruption till the lesson is over. During this time the teacher walks up and down among the desks, writes a line for a scholar now and then, and sees that pens and paper do not run short. ‘No attempt is made to control and regulate the pace; no distinct rules are laid down for the formation of the letters.’ In fact, the children might as well be writing at home. The Inspector mentions one kind of gross carelessness which is of common occurrence. Children who have not got beyond the use of writing on slates are ‘very often indeed compelled to write with the minutest fragment of unpointed slate pencil, thus cramping their hands at the very time their style is being formed.’ In arithmetic the sums which require only a mechanical knowledge of processes are in general fairly done, while the very simplest problems are rarely attempted.”

When teachers, who have been for five years duly impressing upon youthful minds committed to their charge, such valuable historic facts as it is evident from the results of numberless examinations they themselves have imbibed, from those who instructed them, poor easy John Bull may, indeed, feel disposed to ask himself whether the seven millions he has already squandered, and the untold millions he is unhappily pledged

to continue expending for countless years to come, might not have been laid out so as to yield a somewhat more satisfactory return!

At the meeting of the British Association, in 1875, the President of the Mechanical Science section oracularly enunciated that:—"The spread of natural science, is of far more immediate urgency than any other secondary study. Whatever else he may know, viewed by the light of modern necessities, a man who is not fairly versed in exact science, is only a half-educated man, and if he has substituted literature and history for natural science, he has chosen the less useful alternative." But even the few examples, cited in these pages, demonstrate to comprehensions of the humblest calibre, what are the average faculties and attainments of School Board children between the ages of 7 and 14, at which period they necessarily have to begin to acquire the knowledge indispensable to provide them with lodging, and food, and raiment for the rest of their lives. What then can be more ridiculous than to talk about indoctrinating the offspring of a ploughman or a cobbler with even the veriest rudiments of exact science? Such knowledge is excellent for those who are likely to have leisure, in after years, to develop it, but experience shows that even the thin veneer of information, acquired in day schools, speedily disappears in most cases, amid the stern necessities and exacting requirements of real life.

Professor Huxley, in a recent address to a working men's club, on the subject of technical education; laid great stress, upon the importance on the part of a man, who has to gain his livelihood by handicraft, undergoing some such teaching as the following. The professor would have him, to commence, with an already acquired good general education; that is, besides being able to read and write and cipher, he ought to have had, such a general training, as should have awakened his understanding, and given him a real interest in his pursuit.

The next requirement is a good and sound acquaintance with physical science and a knowledge of the properties and character of natural objects. It would also be desirable that he should be able, more or less, to draw—to read one or two languages, so as to have it in his power to know what other nations were doing and have access to valuable sources of information which would otherwise be sealed to him. While engaged, however, in mastering all these various branches of knowledge, he is urged to keep, in all its bloom, the freshness and youthfulness of his mind—all the vigour and elasticity proper to that age. After all this has been duly learnt, the pupil is then to begin in his capacity of apprentice, to master the technicalities of his trade. Supposing him up to 14, to have been in bondage to the Board School of his district, and after that, to have made himself even cursorily acquainted with all the branches of knowledge above indicated, at what age is the future joiner, bricklayer, cook, scrivener, groom, coachman, engine-driver or blacksmith, to begin to learn the technicalities of his craft? Surely the professor's aspirations are somewhat too Utopian. He forgets that the Deluge is past, that the average duration of human life now is under forty years, and that without the abilities of a Crichton and the constitution of an ostrich, it would be hopeless to expect an average apprentice of the 19th century to acquire the accomplishments suggested, unless at the sacrifice of expertness or dexterity of hand in his subsequent vocation.

Undoubtedly, if there should chance to be found in the lower stratum of society, even once in a century, a boy who gave even the slightest indications of developing into a Newton, a Watt, a Davy or a Faraday, it would be of great advantage to the world that he should have the chance of emerging from the mire wherein he was born, and of conferring on his country the inestimable advantages of his mental endowments. But it is very certain that minds such as those, will always work

their way to the front, in spite of all disadvantages inevitably attendant upon their lowly origin. They do not want a State ladder to help them to climb from the gutter to the highest attainable pinnacles. Experience has shown again and again that it is the characteristic of true genius to rise, and in spite of all opposition and disadvantages to assert its just claim to the homage of mankind.

If, out of the hundreds of thousands of school children, plodding their weary way through the intricacies of primary arithmetic or of physical geography, there should at any time chance to be discovered one, who shows a special aptitude for any particular branch of knowledge or for any art; no one would deny, that the spark latent in him, should be fostered and cherished, and that every facility should be afforded to the youth, for developing whatever talent he may possess, but is this a right application of eleemosynary funds?

Should the reader feel any desire to know, to what account the "priceless boon" of reading is turned, to a large extent, at any rate, by those on whom it has been conferred; all that is required, is to cull from the window of the small news-shop nearest to any Board school; specimens of the literature most in demand on Sunday mornings, among the striplings who chance to have spare coins for investment in some of the numerous trashy periodicals of the day.

A small amount of observation, suffices to show, that in many districts, the majority of printed sheets circulating most freely among the school children, are just those that teem either with the very worst or most mischievous fictions, or with the highly flavoured and barbarously illustrated rakings from the police courts. Some of the narratives of the most nauseous and revolting passing events, are interspersed with sentiments subversive of all respect for authority, law, religion or government, or indeed, for any kind or form of subordination.

Here is a serial, the back numbers of which, already fill

more than thirty volumes, and it is said to meet with a steadily-increasing sale. Its apparent object, is to treat habitually with contumely and contempt every sentiment, which those who have the care and culture of young minds at heart, are wont to hold out to them as objects of veneration and regard.

In one number, for instance, allusion is made to the Author of Christianity in these terms:—

“It is no fault of his, that men have deified him, and made him the centre of a huge superstition, which sits like an incubus on the rising thought of Europe.”

Further on:—

“A good man, struggling amidst the dim light of a low and decaying civilization, nearly nineteen centuries ago, is not to be blamed for all the evil which has been done since. But a Christian cannot thus absolve his deity. If Christ came to save humanity, and if he was not the son of a Jewish mechanic, but a god of infinite wisdom, goodness and power, how is the present state of mankind to be accounted for?” “If this world is a God-ordered one, then cruelty to animals has the highest possible sanction.” “What is left to you, O Christian? a mere bag of dry leaves, which the breath of Reason is fast strewing to the winds. Yours is the doctrine of the trinity, and the fall of man, and the vicarious atonement, and eternal hell. Yours are the talking snakes and donkeys, bewitched pigs, and suns that stand still at the word of command. Yours is the God who hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and then punished him for the consequences; the God who has unlimited power, and is, therefore, morally responsible for all the misery, oppression and wrong that has ever existed. These are the doctrines which differentiate you from us.” [That is, avowed atheists.] “Against them—not against you—we proclaim uncompromising war, for we see their consequences in the mutual hatreds and diabolical cruelties of theological sects, in the conspiracies against personal liberty and freedom of thought, the hatred of reasoned truth, the idolatry of mere power, which constitute the chief hindrances to the progress of the human race towards a state in which men and women shall live happy and happiness-diffusing lives, and die with the sweet conviction that long after their names have been forgotten, the lot of mankind shall still be somewhat better and nobler for the work that they have done.”

Now how is it possible for boys, who Sunday after Sunday gloat over pages upon pages, filled with effusions such as these, without check or hindrance, not to have, speedily eradicated from their minds, whatever minute seedling of good may have been implanted during the previous week?

Possibly, however, as School Boards for the most part

professedly abstain from inculcating religious doctrines of any kind, the above result, infallible though it must be, does not much concern them.

One of the most eminent historians whom this country has ever produced observed more than a century ago :—"To the multitude all religions are equally true ; to the philosopher, all equally false ; to the magistrate, all equally useful." The important lesson inculcated by this observation, will most assuredly unmistakably manifest itself ere long, if it has not already done so. A generation or two, turned loose upon the country, veneered with a pretentious smattering of elementary education, the nature whereof may be very fairly estimated by the specimens that have been given above, and with a knowledge of morality and religion, upon a par with their history and geography, are as likely to develop into a population of communists and atheists as it is possible to imagine ! That this is no imaginary contingency, may be inferred from the fact, that in the columns of the weekly publication from which the above extracts have been taken, there are no less than thirteen works advertised ; with tendencies more or less openly avowed, either advocating irreligion or doctrines antagonistic to all government, to the rights of property, to everything, indeed, that can render existence tolerable or society possible.

Another weekly serial, reported to have a circulation of more than half a million, can scarcely be less pernicious in its effects. It is not likely to find its way into the hands of any but the very lowest classes, but still, as the young now-a-days are to be made to read, whether they will or not ; tens of thousands of copies must get into the hands of boys who will greedily imbibe the poison, its pages disseminate broadcast. In a very recent issue, there is a spitefully malignant article of nearly a column, headed in large type "The Cost of Britain's Royalty," the obvious purport being, to bring into odium the Throne and our august Sovereign, to create public dissatis-

faction, by inveighing in no measured terms against the alleged enormity of the cost of monarchy as contrasted with that of a republic. It then sums up with the assertion that :—

“This snug German family contrives to relieve John Bull’s purse of a pretty heavy sum every year. *There is not a drop of English blood in the veins of any one of the above-mentioned personages.* They are all Germans. The Queen’s father and mother were Germans ; she married a German, and consequently all her children are German. The fact of their being settled in England does not make them English. Intermarriage with English people can alone introduce English blood into the veins of a foreign family settled in England. Foreigners may become naturalised by law, but no law can make them truly English. Blood alone can do that. Therefore the whole of the Royal Family is *German*. And what with incomes, allowances, palaces, yachts and the thousand other expenses entailed upon us by our monarchical institutions, this family alone costs the country about a million a year. Yes, a million sterling every year. Against the German name of Guelph in the national ledger the pleasant little amount of one million sterling must be written every year.”

True it is, of course, that the Civil List has been fixed at £385,000 a year, but it is equally true, that that sum is actually less than the income from the Crown lands and from all “the hereditary rates, duties, payments and revenues in England, Scotland and Ireland, respectively of every kind” which the country takes in return, so that it is, in fact, a gainer by the transaction ! The private hereditary revenues of the Queen were, before she ceded them for a fixed annual stipend, as much her property and held by as indisputable title as the estate, real or personal, of any of her subjects. So much for the utter fallacy of the writer’s charge, which, unanswered and unexplained, is calculated to do much irremediable mischief.

On the other hand, it can be shown that the vaunted cheap Government of the United States costs just £627,000 a year *more* than our own ! The hereditary revenues accepted by the country, if administered with the same care that a shrewd man of business would bestow upon the management of his estate, would yield a large surplus to the public over and above the Civil List ! This important fact is altogether

ignored by the malicious, whose sole object is to sow dissension between class and class, and to preach the vile doctrines of hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Taking up another penny paper, which a Board school girl of thirteen had been diligently studying, it was found to contain column upon column of atrocious assaults, wife murders, robberies with violence, attacks upon defenceless women and children, the details of each crime being given with revolting minuteness. We meet with a column in larger type than the rest, and in it an editorial article headed "Revelations of Royalty." Adverting to the ex-Queen of Spain, the writer states that, although

"the Pope sends her golden roses, and she is always surrounded by a flock of priests. Yet, for all that, her life has not been a clean one. She has a large family of children, probably not two of them by the same father. Three or four-and-twenty years ago she had General Serrano as her lover. Since then she has passed through the embraces of, perhaps, half a hundred other men, till she became the concubine of the stalwart Marfori. Her husband is never spoken, nor heard of. . . . Her son Alphonso, King of Spain, is about marrying his cousin Mercedes, daughter of the Duke de Montpensier, and the ex-Queen Isabella's sister. . . . The ex-Queen, furious at the projected marriage, invited Don Carlos, her son's rival, to her house in Paris, and ostentatiously welcomed him as her guest. Thereupon the handsome pension she got from Spain, was stopped; she was prohibited ever entering the country, and the Spaniah ambassadors abroad, were told no longer to recognise her as Queen. Isabella was furious, and determined on revenge. She has adopted a somewhat strange method of obtaining it, and one from which most women would shrink with abhorrence. In a letter to the Emperor of Austria, Isabella is said to have proclaimed her own shame, and denounced Alphonso as a bastard. Of course, having been born in wedlock, that does not invalidate his title to the throne. All the world knew he was Serrano's child, but it remained for the Royal Jezebel, his mother, to proclaim that fact to the public. *Such is Royalty, such the foul and filthy idols which millions of fools worship!*"

The whole purport and object of this tirade is conveyed in the last sentence. The lesson, somewhat illogically worked out, if it means anything, amounts to this: that because an individual, who for many years has ceased to retain anything but the name of Royalty, has given rise to certain scandals, all monarchs, however irreproachable their rule, or however blameless and virtuous their lives may have been, equally

deserve the same sweeping denunciation, the miserable scribbler impotently hurls at the ex-Queen, his sole object being to endeavour to eradicate the time-honoured behest "Honour the King."

The hundreds, or may be thousands, of readers among school children, whose slender notions of obedience and respect for authority are never very apparent, speedily accept the welcome doctrine, together with all that it implies.

There is unfortunately no antidote at hand to counteract the baneful influence of this class of writer, whose bread depends upon the amount of mischief his effusions are calculated to disseminate. An obviously conclusive answer to the kind of pseudo-argument he wields, of course is, that if a single instance, such as the one above adduced, suffices to condemn the whole monarchical system in every country, the cowardly brutality, scoundrelism, drunkenness, and utter worthlessness of the thirty or forty intelligent British mechanics, who appear weekly at any one of our police courts, to expiate their offences, is more than sufficient to consign the entire class to which they belong, to a still lower depth of infamy, even than that to which the fulminations of the indignant penny-a-liner above quoted, would hurl every monarch in Europe because of the marital infidelity of one ex-Queen !

It is hardly necessary to adduce further specimens of this kind of repulsive literature, since by the expenditure of a shilling any one, who cares to do so, can buy an armful of it and form his own judgment from his delectable acquisition. Suffice it to say, that in a single shop, established exclusively to purvey serials of this description, no less than two-and-thirty, on a recent occasion, were displayed on the counter at one time, all bearing different titles, and decorated on their outer pages with woodcuts specially attractive to street boys, and comprising subjects more or less truculent and sanguinary in their aspect. Not one of these publications, be it observed,

would any decent man, with the least self-respect or regard for the moral welfare of his family, allow to enter his door. One exhibits, with all the minutest concomitant details, the interesting process of garotting. In another a man is portrayed in the act of severing his wife's head from her shoulders with a razor. In nine other engravings the subject is either a murder of peculiar barbarity or a highway robbery attended with circumstances of special atrocity! It would indeed seem, as though the children who crowd these shops, were guided in making their weekly selections by the revolting nature of the artistic efforts made to attract them. The more diabolical the outrage delineated, the more rapid the sale, the greater to them the prospect of pleasing excitement from the explanatory letter-press. Great as this evil has long been—and it is obviously daily on the increase—it seems extraordinary that not only no attempt is made to check the trade, but by the universal inculcation of the art of reading, hundreds of thousands are now amenable to the poison, around whom it would have flowed innocuously, but for the schooling that has been administered to them. There is a ludicrous inconsistency, too, in these matters as regards the efforts of those who busy themselves in what they imagine to be the suppression of vice. A man, whose specific offence was offering for sale, photographs of ballet-girls arrayed in inverted muslin saucers, and others, taken from pictures actually on the walls of the National Gallery, was consigned to imprisonment, with hard labour, for two years. His shop was closed, his home broken up, and his family despatched pitilessly to the workhouse. No attempt whatever is meanwhile made to repress the ballet itself, nor to veil from the public gaze the very paintings, Justice with blind stolidity holds it to be a criminal act, to reproduce on paper! Conceding, however, that it is, and ought to be a crime statutorily punishable, to photograph that which is daily gazed at by all classes without let or hindrance, and with-

out even giving rise to a prurient thought, except in the minds of the most vicious, is it not amazing that not only thousands upon thousands of tons of the literature of the "blood and thunder" school should be allowed to be disseminated not only through all the large towns, but should be suffered to penetrate unchecked into every village and hamlet in the three kingdoms, while sapient Boards are vigorously engaged, squandering millions in the unfortunately too successful endeavour to qualify every child to derive the fullest amount of ineradicable evil from scandalous publications that only strive to outvie each other in their permanently pernicious tendencies?

One hears of course, *ad nauseam*, in the hackneyed jargon of the Board-room or the more blatant claptrap of the hustings, stereotyped aphorisms constantly put forth and as constantly stentoriously cheered, such as:—"Once give a boy the ability to read, and you have presented him with a key that places at once at his disposal the whole literature of his country from the remotest times. It enables him to master any branch of science, to acquire any amount of future knowledge, to elevate and expand his mind. It qualifies him to take rank, if he so pleases, with the highest and most cultivated intellects of the day," &c. The bombastic orator, basking in the full sunshine of his fool's paradise, has repeated this kind of meaningless babble so long and so often, that at last he believes implicitly all he affirms. He is confident on the subject because he is quite certain, and he is positive because he has no shadow of doubt! His faith is sublime because it is immutable; it entitles him to veneration, to all "the respect due to hopeless, helpless imbecility." Practical common sense, like true science however, waves aside all conclusions resting only on the theories of Utopian dreamers, and allows the judgment to be swayed by facts alone. Nor do those facts comprise mere isolated instances industriously

culled here and there, they are broad, general and incontrovertible results to be met with abundantly in every direction. They emphatically negative the assertions of Noodledom, and ruthlessly demolish all its baseless visions.

"Education" has been defined by a popular writer on the subject, to be "the art of developing the physical, intellectual, and moral faculties of man. It has occupied the greatest minds in all ages—Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Bacon, Milton, Locke, Rousseau," &c.

In England, the first Parliamentary grant for its promotion dates as far back as 1834, five years later, a Committee of the Privy Council was appointed to advance national education throughout the country, and yet, looking back through the dim vista of four-and-forty years, the retrospect is certainly not brilliant. Nor, taking into account the successive benefits conferred by the statutes of 1844, '48, '50, '57, '60, '61 and '62, culminating with the "priceless boon" bestowed by the memorable Act of 1870, can even the most sanguine, venture to affirm that the future prospect is in any respect encouraging.

After the operations, and the well-meant and no less strenuous exertions, of that august body the Privy Council, there is no improvement discernible in the character of that portion of the literary productions of the day, in the greatest demand, and read with the greatest avidity by the populace. Vigorous attempts are said to have been made for many years past, to inculcate a love of music and a taste for poetry; let us see how far these efforts have been crowned with success. In February last, an action, one of a series of similar suits, all instituted by the same plaintiff, was brought by a poet—it would seem—of considerable repute—against a publisher, for infringing the very valuable copyright of a song, described, *par excellence*, as "*the song of the day*"—a copyright so precious, that it had been thought advisable to bring five separate actions to vindicate the authorship, or rather the proprietorship.

For two entire days, the Chancery division of the High Court of Justice, with some half-dozen counsel hard at work, were occupied with this matter, in respect of which heavy damages were claimed.

The song is entitled "*What an Afternoon !*" It is encored nightly by enthusiastic audiences at crowded music-halls. It is published at 4s. Its sale is described as prodigious. The reader may judge of its merits, its sentiment and pathos, from the following stanzas :—

1.

"I'll sing you a song of my uncle Pete,
 What an afternoon !
 He buttoned his eyebrows round his feet,
 What an afternoon !
 Put his feet in hot water to keep them dry,
 What an afternoon !
 He went to the play on a blue-tailed fly,
 What an afternoon !

Chorus.

He polished his socks with pumpkin squash,
 And always sent his teeth to the wash,
 He dined, as a rule, off a camomile pill,
 In a three-pair back at Haverstock Hill.

2.

"The roof of his mouth was striped with red,
 What an afternoon !
 And he put his boots on over his head,
 What an afternoon !
 When he opened his mouth it would make you stare,
 What an afternoon !
 You could almost see the roots of his hair,
 What an afternoon !

Chorus.

3.

"He kept tame butterflies out in the yard,
 What an afternoon !
 And fed them on tintacks, cinders, and lard,
 What an afternoon !
 One day we both went out on a spree,
 What an afternoon !
 And he got drunk on sealing-wax tea,
 What an afternoon !

Chorus."

&c.

&c.

&c.

It would be obviously absurd, to attempt to criticise an effusion such as this, nor can any one justly censure the author. He is scarcely to be blamed, because the public, whose money he solicits, manifests due appreciation of his very pitiable nonsense. So long as copies of this choice production, utterly devoid as it is, of wit, humour, or even of the humblest pretension to sense, are in demand, so long as various crowded music-halls nightly re-echo the plaudits of admiring thousands, who vehemently encore, again and again, the miserable trash; plenty of scribblers will be found of equal mental power and with sufficient talent to supply the market, and that to any extent that may be required.

Nevertheless, it can hardly afford matter for hopeful anticipation, to those worthy members of the Privy Council who, for nearly half a century, have been lavishly expending million after million of public money in the vain endeavour to "develop the physical, intellectual and moral faculties" of successive generations, to find a large proportion of their pupils, only eager after all, to devour such nauseous mental pabulum as this, or else nightly thronging theatres, where the staple and never-failing attraction, consists either of the wildest extravaganza or the most senseless burlesque, interspersed with questionable jokes. The model youth, neat and clean externally, requiring those, mainly at whose expense he has been educated, with civility and respect, treating with deference the classes above him and manifesting by his general conduct, habits of subordination, self-control and good feeling—is an utter myth. Up to the present time at least, he will most certainly be sought for amongst the Board schoolboys in vain. It is moreover a subject of complaint, so frequent and so universal, as not to admit of doubt, that, concurrently with the dissemination of the "priceless boon" of education among the lower orders, there has been a manifest deterioration in their morals, and a lamentable advance of the cause of intemperance, while every one who has

aught to do with the administration of justice, is well aware that there is a very decided increase of crimes of violence, such as wife-murder and savage assaults on women. Crimes by the way, almost unknown to the police on the Continent, though in England, in three successive days in February last, as many men were hanged for wife murder; and in the same papers, that announced their grim fate, the details were given, of some half-dozen fresh cases of similar cowardly brutality, on the part of as many "intelligent and educated British workmen."

The School Boards, with all their untiring zeal and indomitable energy, with all their earnest and very possibly sincere desire to diffuse knowledge, are themselves altogether deficient in one important particular; one moreover, in respect whereof ignorance cannot but lead to disaster. They have yet to master the important distinction between education and *instruction*. Real intelligent instruction thoroughly adapted to the capacity of the learner, and imparted, upon topics that cannot fail to be permanently and practically useful to him, would indeed be a "priceless boon," compared with the residue of the flimsy tissue that remains behind, after he has passed the ordeal of an examination by an inspector. Has it ever—in a lucid hour—occurred to the wise heads assembled hebdomadally on their costly carpet, and deferentially attended by their still more valuable clerk, to contemplate in imagination, the prospective careers of the urchins who are being turned out by tens of thousands, in a constant stream, and bearing the brand "Educated" stamped upon them?

What are they fit for? what position in life are they qualified to take? for what, has their five or seven years' schooling adapted them? Noddle-dom will of course superciliously reply, "Do!—they can *now* do anything and everything that can be required of them." The precise converse of this gratifying fallacy, however, is found to be the case in reality. The superficial semblance of knowledge which has succeeded

in palming itself off upon the wearied and despairing inspector as the nearest approach to an imitation of the genuine article he can hope for, is found to have endowed its possessor with none of the qualifications that are in any way wanted, for his advance in life. Supposing the world to need nothing more than an unlimited supply of ordinary office or copying clerks capable of writing fair legible hands, of ciphering, or even of posting up ledgers, it is not impossible that a moderate percentage of Board School lads might, after an additional apprenticeship of some three or four years, be qualified for situations yielding £20 or £30 a year, and leading, after long lapse of time, to somewhat further emolument. But it so happens that candidates for these coveted appointments already exist, and that, too, in overwhelming numbers. There are, and have been, long years before England was afflicted with this education craze, scores—aye, hundreds—of applicants for every vacancy of the kind, even where the poor stipend offered only held out the promise of the barest subsistence. The supply has always infinitely exceeded the demand, not only here, but in all the colonies. There are, as it is, thousands upon thousands of youths, emaciated, threadbare and shoeless, who have received many of them, even University educations, but for whom no congenial occupation can be found. They shiver and starve and “loaf” about the wharves and quays, so long as the small pittance they may have brought with them lasts, while the burly but illiterate handicraftsman, probably unable to sign his name, but who can wield a hammer, an axe or a trowel, is steadily amassing shekels, or acquiring land and houses, and is, in fact, in all respects a far more valuable and desirable member of the community, than the shallow but really ignorant prig, or the empty pedant who can turn his hand to no one useful thing. Every employer of labour, without exception, or any person of average intelligence who possesses even limited powers of observation, knows only too well, that

the more a mechanic is, what people are pleased to call "educated," the less work he invariably does. At the same time he is almost invariably more self-sufficient, more opinionated, and generally more ill-conditioned, more insolent—more drunken, not to say more utterly worthless in all respects. Noddledom may solemnly shake its empty head, upturn the palms of its hands and the whites of its glassy eyes, but the stubborn and unpalatable fact remains, and the bitter experience of any master in any trade or business will be found only too emphatically to corroborate this statement.

Divested then, of all the ornate but empty and deceptive rhetoric of the Board-room, where smug and smiling faces periodically meet, and greet each other, on the incalculable benefits they imagine they are conferring on their fellow-creatures, a truthful report upon the present system of compulsory education, would proclaim, that it is really nothing more than a cumbrous, complicated and extravagantly costly piece of mechanism, for converting sturdy laborious ignorance, into intractable and insubordinate indolence. It is adopting the most certain method, that misguided philanthropy could devise, for unfitting the youth of either sex for earning their bread by reputable industry. It is overstocking the market with candidates for the higher orders of employment at the same time that it is withdrawing them altogether from those vocations where they would be really needed, had they not been disqualified by the pretentious absurdities wherewith their heads are filled.

It seems never to have occurred to the busy-bodies who have striven so hard and so successfully to bring about this absurd anomaly, that precisely to the same extent that the lower orders are artificially raised above their proper stratum, their own class, and all above it, are necessarily dragged down. Incalculable numbers, coming up in shoals annually from Board Schools, utterly despising manual labour, and with

pseudo-literary attainments, just sufficient to urge them to reject contemptuously the offer of any menial occupation, can have no other effect, than to reduce the already scanty pay of *employés*, drawn hitherto from the middling and upper classes. Society at large, suffers meanwhile irremediably from the insufficient supply, if not total absence, of persons properly qualified for domestic service and industrial employments generally. There is in fact no more general subject of complaint than the universal worthlessness of modern servants, at least of those who have undergone the farcical operation of school cramming, and who consequently consider themselves in all respects—except in that of fortune—the perfect equals of their masters.

The domestic of days gone by, who prided himself on a length of service which almost identified him, as a humble member, with the family he zealously and loyally served, whose interests, regarding them as intimately connected with his own, he sought on all occasions to promote, and who steadfastly upheld against all opponents, the honour and good repute of the master with whom he lived, has become a thing of the past. His penmanship was probably *nil*, or at any rate indifferent, his orthography might be original, and his slight knowledge of the art of reading, happily kept him from wasting hours over trashy newspapers or mischievous works of fiction. He rose betimes, knew his duties thoroughly, and took an honest pride in discharging them conscientiously, his greatest pleasure being to win the approval of his employer, in whose service it was his ambition to remain, so long as his strength and faculties lasted, when comfortable provision would gladly be made by a grateful master for the declining years of one who had served him so faithfully. Unhappily, however, for society, this useful, trustworthy and invaluable dependant is as extinct as the dodo. He has, alas! by education and evolution been “improved off the face of creation.” His successor is not unusually an idle, wasteful, dissolute vagabond, rendering for the wages he

receives, as little work, as may be compatible with the retention of his place, combining with tradespeople and others to trick and cheat his master. He is often too, the slavish member of some association, the regulations whereof, forbid his remaining more than three years in the same service!

Many persons who have had long and convincing experience of these facts, are only too willing to give higher wages to servants who may have escaped the baneful ordeal of Board School "cramming." They are perfectly alive to the unpalatable truth already adverted to, that just in proportion to the "education" of members of the wage-receiving classes, is their increased untrustworthiness, disrespect, general inefficiency, carelessness and incompetence. If really useful, practical *instruction* could be substituted for mock education, if the periods of boyhood and adolescence were devoted to a proper preparation for the duties that are to engage manhood and to dignify old age, the very serious burden inflicted by Boards, might be borne with more resignation than is likely to be the case now. Some good results could not fail to take the place of a mischief, that promises to become before very long, perfectly intolerable.

Years ago, when the question, of providing, at the public expense, gratuitous education, for all who were unable to pay for it, was freely discussed, not only in Parliament, but all over the kingdom, the press teemed with publications, all proving, conclusively and satisfactorily enough—to the writers—the fearful result of allowing any longer "street Arabs and gutter children" to grow up, in squalor and ignorance. Nothing of course was easier than to convince those, who had never bestowed an hour's consideration on the subject, what would be the dreadful consequences that must ensue, were generation after generation, suffered to advance to manhood, without knowing how to read and write. "Let these poor neglected creatures," it was said, "but be instructed, only thus far, and let them but

be taught the simple rules of arithmetic: it will then be seen that, having mastered this amount of 'knowledge,' they will forthwith, have opened out to them, any future career they may individually be pleased to select." "There would"—it was added—"be no need to take further trouble about them, they would virtually be placed at the foot of a ladder, which they had but to mount, in order to attain to positions of competence and independence." The vision was so pleasing, the preliminaries appeared so charmingly simple, so inexpensive withal, while the promised results were so vast and so beneficial not only to the recipients, but to the nation at large—the cost could not, by any possibility, exceed a few hundred thousands a year—that the alluring bait was greedily swallowed. The fiat accordingly went forth; all objection, all opposition was borne down by overwhelming numbers, the voice of the minority was silenced, the Educational Department of the Government was called into being, and it was confidently predicted that henceforth, the criminal classes would disappear, that prisons and penal servitude would alike be abolished.

There were nevertheless; men of philosophic and reflective minds, not likely to be carried away by the shallow, empty, *ad captandum* arguments above cited, who not only expressed grave doubts upon the subject, but strenuously urged that the "Education Movement" as it was termed, would almost to a certainty, be attended with effects precisely opposite to those so eagerly anticipated, by its votaries. They of course freely admitted that sound and genuine instruction, in the abstract, was unquestionably a boon, to those on whom it might be judiciously conferred. But they maintained, that to distribute indiscriminately to infants of tender years, a smattering of such so-called "education," as could alone be served out wholesale, to those who are compulsorily driven to receive it, would only have the effect of making them discontented with their stations and give rise to hopes, which in the majority of cases, must infallibly

be crushed. Society could not go on, if day labourers, coal-heavers, scavengers, and domestic servants were exterminated. Refine and educate these people, it was predicted, and they will all undoubtedly aspire to be gentlemen and ladies. They will contemptuously spurn all occupations, requiring manual labour or entailing menial services. "You have educated us"—will be the cry—"it is now your duty to provide us with such situations as we may think proper to accept." There is no fact more certain, than that so-termed "education," utterly unfits men of the lower grades, for rough and laborious or disgusting duties. It may be perfectly true, that amongst those of gentle birth and even of natural refinement, many may be found, who never shrink from duties that are rough or perilous or even revolting, but no one, at all conversant with human nature, can have failed to observe, that all who spring from a lower caste, almost without exception, if lucky enough to have passed merely "in the lowest Standards," indignantly repudiate any offer of work, that an illiterate man, of mere thews and sinews, would only, too gladly accept.

The system adopted in this country, of late years, on the subject of education, may very fairly, be likened to that of a landlord, who admiring the action, condition and appearance of his tenant's sturdy Clydesdale team, should say to the farmer:—"You have got some capital horses there, Giles—never saw any that did their work better or with greater ease; but still there's one thing they want; without *that*, they're worth very little." "And what might that be, sir?" would be the probable reply of the astonished Giles. "Why they want training—they want *educating*. As it is, they can only draw a plough, a cart or a waggon." "Ah, weel, and that's about all I reckon I want 'em to do." "Oh! but *any* horse can do that, you shouldn't mind going to a little expense to have yours made perfect." After some demur, the farmer, loth to offend, yields to the importunity of his landlord, and though he could ill

spare the services of his horses, he sends them up, next day, to undergo some months' training at Astley's. On their return, the result of their schooling is seen, in the readiness wherewith at the word of command they clumsily perform a variety of amusing stage tricks. Their owner looks ruefully at the bill he has to pay for their acquired accomplishments, and is still more dismayed that each horse, instead of throwing his weight when required, into his collar as of yore, gives himself up to quaint antics and vagaries, and is no longer of much real use as a teamster. He thinks to himself, what a fool he has been to waste time and cash, in spoiling four good horses, by rendering them wholly unfit for the services required of them! The absurdity of the proceeding is palpable enough, but in what respect is it more senseless, than the enforcement of compulsory education, on those who need it not, and who, taking into account their station in life, are certainly not likely to be improved by it?

Those who took exception upon principle, to the proposal to administer, on a grand scale, doses of "State Education," to all classes, whether willing or not, to benefit by the operation, took occasion to indicate, with singular foresight, the mischief that must undoubtedly ensue, from interference with the "Voluntary system" which had already done, and was continuing to accomplish most admirably, all that needed to be attempted in the way of education. When the subject was under discussion in the House of Commons, the noble earl, now at the head of Her Majesty's Government, observed very justly and with great accuracy of discernment that;—

"It became the House well to consider, what might be the effect of interfering, with the habit of self-government by the people of England. It appeared to him, that the Society of Education, that school of philosophers, were, with all their vaunted intellect and learning, fast returning to the system of a barbarous age—the system of paternal government. Wherever

was found, what was called a paternal government, was found a State education. . . . It had been discovered, that the best way to insure implicit obedience was to commence tyranny in the nursery. The truth was, that where everything was left to the Government, the subject became a machine."

This is in fact, just what the Education Act is actually doing. It is depriving local authorities, of duties and functions they have hitherto ably and judiciously exercised, and which it is certainly the height of un-wisdom to tamper with.

Nay, worse still, it is compelling the provident and the industrious, to instruct the children of the improvident and the indolent; the upright and moral, to discharge the neglected duties of the worthless and profligate. It is a mischievous system, that impoverishes the well-to-do, without benefiting the poor, at the same time that it confirms their idleness, blunts their affections, and debases their minds.

The pernicious effects of interference with existing systems of self-government and education have lately been very remarkably observable in Scotland. In that country, there had been, almost from time immemorial, a system of popular education of which the people were naturally proud. It afforded to every one, not only rudimentary instruction, but liberal culture, to a certain extent, and it held out, to every lad of more than ordinary ability, however humble his means or position, considerable facilities for raising himself in the social scale. Each parochial school was in effect a grammar-school, and even something more, it was under the management of a carefully-selected and well-educated man, qualified to prepare pupils for matriculation at one or other of the Scottish universities. All this, however, was changed by the unfortunate Act of 1872. School Boards have been set up in every parish, the "dominie" has been superseded, and every Scotch school is now under the imme-

diate sway of the establishment at Whitehall. The baneful result of the alteration is already discernible in a remarkable falling off in the last five years in the percentage of scholars, qualified for a subsequent university career. Nothing can possibly prove, more incontestably than this simple fact, that the new-fangled and costly scheme with all its meddling and muddling and centralisation and Government inspectors and reports, &c., is doing less real good, than the old but unambitious system, which had given universal satisfaction, and against which no reasonable complaint had ever been alleged. If the reader should inquire, as he naturally may, at what pecuniary expense has this lamentable change been brought about, the short answer is:—£350,000 a year, defrayed from the Imperial Exchequer!

It is somewhat difficult to fix upon a definition of the word "Education," that would meet with general acceptance. To describe as "educated," a child who has just managed to scrape through its examination and has consequently obtained a certificate from the inspector, is simply farcical, for it has then—and that only in a very few instances too—acquired the preliminary means, for subsequent rudimentary instruction. If its life hereafter, is to be one of toil and hardship, the chances are, that it never again has the opportunity of opening a book, and the thin veneer of elementary knowledge it had acquired, will soon be found to have altogether disappeared. Different minds again, have different ideas, as to what ought to be, the end, aim and object of all education.

Professor Huxley, one unquestionably of the highest and most cultivated intellects of the present day, states it as his opinion, that its highest and greatest aim should be "to promote morality and refinement, by teaching men to discipline themselves, and by leading them to see, that the highest, as it is the only permanent content, is to be obtained, not by grovelling in the rank and steaming valleys of sense, but by continual striving

towards those high peaks, where, resting in eternal calm, reason discerns the undefined but bright ideal of the highest good—a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night.”

This magniloquent sentence, concluded an address to the members of the Midland Institute on the 9th Oct., 1871, and was of course received with a “burst of loud and long-continued applause.” But with all due deference to the brilliant orator and to his audience, what—may we ask—is the precise meaning intended to be conveyed? “It *may*,” says Common sense, “mean a great deal, but who can possibly say what it does mean?” “What is the highest good?” is the anxious but very reasonable inquiry of another. “Can the bright ideal be made to come forth and unfold itself?” “What is the highest happiness?” “Who has enjoyed it?” “What must be done, and what left undone, in order to secure it?” “What is it like when secured?” In short, does the sentence—beautiful as is the diction, imply more than the equally high-sounding but equally obscure burst of eloquence, on the part of a speaker, in an animated discussion at a mechanics’ debating club, who, with deep voice, due solemnity of manner and suitable gesture, thus delivered himself: “Happiness, Mr. President, is like a crow, perched amid the clouds, upon the highest peak of a far-distant mountain, which the eager sportsman in vain endeavours to ensue. He looks at the crow, and the crow looks at him; but the moment he endeavours to reproach him, he expands his hyacinthine plumes, and disdainfully spurning his foe, banishes for ever the iridescent tints of the rainbow, which the learned and illustrious Newton, in vain endeavoured to explain the causes of they. He then, bathed in eternal sunshine, wings his celestial flight to some more serene and exalted crag, there to dwell, for ever undisturbed, among the ministering spirits of the Just!”

But this alas! is the Age of shams, and the shallow, imperfect, mock education, on which millions are being yearly lavished,

is perhaps after all, only in character with the Age that has given it birth. "No sham so gross," wrote L'Estrange, two centuries ago, "but it will pass upon a weak man that is pragmatical and inquisitive."

The modern practice of "cramming" for examinations, is one of the most pernicious characteristics of an Age of sham. It is an absurd system, under which youths, who have the merest semblance of an acquaintance with a subject, contrive to delude an examiner into the belief that they are intimately acquainted with it, in all its details. The knack is usually acquired by working, for many hours a day, for months together, at examination papers, on particular subjects. Little if any, useful knowledge is gained by the process, but as similar questions and similar problems must unavoidably recur at all examinations, the candidate, by degrees, obtains a tolerable amount of specious confidence, and if he have the good luck not to encounter too astute an examiner, frequently gains a creditable place. Others however, who conscientiously endeavour to master the subjects before them, by hard plodding, very commonly break down in the training and occasionally in despair, lay violent hands upon themselves. Thus it was, that within the space of a few weeks, last year, no less than *nine* promising young men, who felt over-anxious as to their fate, at examinations, they had to undergo, all destroyed themselves, simply because they felt unable to face the dreaded ordeal. An intelligent writer on this subject, observes very truly, with regard to the evil tendency of "cram," that:—"It is fatal to all true intellectual life. A boy has to load his memory with vast masses of facts which he only imperfectly understands. The process develops abundance of conceit, for it enables him to talk largely on all sorts of subjects; but his logical faculty lies dormant, imagination is untouched, and the probability is, that he becomes so disgusted with his years of enforced toil, that when he is free, he throws books aside for ever, as an intolerable nuisance.

There can be no true education which is not gradual, and adapted at each stage to the capacities of the pupil. In Germany, the best educated nation in the world, examinations do, indeed, exist; but they are used merely as a fair test of knowledge, slowly acquired, never as a means of compelling unnaturally swift growth. Only in Austria and China, does a system of examination and cram, at all corresponding to our own, flourish; and we do not know that these are the countries Englishmen would most desire to imitate. Now that jaded lads are beginning to commit suicide, we may perhaps hope to see the whole question re-considered, and a return to more rational methods of education than we have recently adopted. It is not to the credit of the Universities that they should have needed so very disagreeable a reminder of a plain duty."

Another author, referring to the preparation, now in vogue for the Indian service, dilates in the following terms upon the evils of "cram":—

"It has been found, or it has been supposed, to be necessary to take away lads from school at the age of sixteen or seventeen, thus effectually depriving them of the crowning advantages of a school career, and to place them with a crammer. This necessity has been as much as anything else, the result of the absurd principle on which the examination has been arranged and has been conducted. The subjects that have paid best, have been those which are very properly the least prominent in a public-school curriculum; the examiners themselves have been selected from an exceedingly limited range, and the tutor for the Indian service, has made it his business rather to impart to his pupil a mastery of the hobbies and foibles of the examiner, than of the subject. The maximum age of candidates has stood at twenty-one; as a matter of fact, the majority of successful candidates have been under nineteen. Nothing can be more deplorable than the experiences of life which the students preparing for the Indian service, have been condemned to acquire. At an age when the rational discipline which the associations and members of school or college secure, is the one thing they have wanted, they have either been established in London lodgings, or, an alternative infinitely worse, they have become the inmates of the crammer's private house. In either event it is a matter of special congratulation if they have contrived to preserve the tone and the appearance of gentlemen. The moral influence of the clever crammer has usually been of the worst description. He has regaled his youthful hearers with conversation sometimes coarse, sometimes impious, and frequently both. He has, thoughtlessly perhaps, but none the less surely, sapped the foundation of their ethical constitution. He has exalted before them an ideal of hard living and hard study, of industry and dissipation, and in those instances where he

has not successfully played the part of Mephistopheles rather than Mentor, it has been, because his pupils have retained a sufficient amount of refinement to be disgusted with the flippant and foul example of their preceptor. In these establishments there has been no attempt to enforce discipline. The crammer pockets his fees, and has made it his business not to see what can be done with all his pupils, but to concentrate his energies upon a sufficient number of promising youths to maintain and increase his reputation. It is melancholy to think of the number of youthful miscarriages which this system has involved, of the sums of money, forthcoming by severe domestic economy, which have been worse than wasted, and of the painful complications in which the competition-wallah aspirant—'lord of himself, that heritage of woe'—in a London lodging-house has contrived to get entangled. It is the student for the Indian service who has been the lineal successor of the medical student of Albert Smith, and the rowdiness and conceit of the former, have been so much the more objectionable than those of the latter, as his years have been the fewer. The next stage of the selected candidate has scarcely been an improvement. He is a probationer, with an allowance from the Government of £200 or £150 a year for the purpose of gaining knowledge of certain special subjects, and passing periodical examinations in each. For two years he is left to pick up this knowledge as best he can. He is to be seen in the underground railway, rushing from one tutor to another. His external appearance is a cross between that of a German student and a notary's clerk, and he has exhibited an entire ignorance of the laws of social breeding. Who can be surprised, that when the civilian, developed under these auspices, has arrived in India, the Indian Government has been disappointed in the product of home culture?"

Professor Huxley, in the course of an address on the subject of medical education, said that he well recollected the long and arduous struggles he underwent, to master the contents of a book on drugs, for the purpose of a particular examination, adding significantly, that as soon as it was over,—“I will undertake to say, that I forgot it all, a week afterwards. Not one trace of a knowledge of drugs, has remained in my memory from that time to this!” And yet this cruel, but ridiculous process of preparing boys for periodical examinations—much as geese are crammed for Michaelmas or turkeys for Christmas—goes on, and is extending, wherever Noodledom has aught to do, with the business of education. It is, as has already been shown, the principal process, whereby, Government grants are acquired for Board schools, and so long as that is the case, it will naturally be their dominant system, as well as their bane.

The present mode of preparing for Civil Service examina-

tions, is necessarily still more objectionable, than the similar process as adopted in Board schools, in anticipation of the periodical visit of the inspector; to say nothing of the injurious mental strain, at a time of life, when over-exertion of the brain, ought especially to be guarded against. Besides, it affords no guarantee, that the class attained, is any indication, much less proof positive, that the subjects in which the candidate has passed, with the highest credit, have either been thoroughly mastered or acquired in such a way, as to be of any permanent service in after-life. But the startling fact, that in 1877, within a period of three months nine young men, of fair promise, occupying good positions, and probably of more than average ability, were tempted to make away with themselves, for the reason already assigned, gives reason to suppose that many more may have succumbed, whose names will never now transpire. Those, again, who break down in the training, are frequently so weakened, physically, that they never thoroughly recover, but either perish prematurely, or linger on miserably with shattered frames and weakened brains. It most assuredly cannot be said, that any branch of the service has benefited, by the transfusion into its ranks, of those who have worked their way thither through the intervention of a practised "coach." Any one who has had much to do with public offices, can detect without difficulty among the subordinates, the supercilious, conceited prig, usually with a most unsatisfactory knowledge of the routine of his department, or of his own particular work, yet scarcely affecting to conceal his disgust, at the irksomeness of the duties it imposes. He contrasts unfavourably indeed with the older officials who are prompt with a satisfactory reply, to every inquiry addressed to them, though they may not have graduated in any of the "cram" subjects on which these juniors affect to pride themselves.

Referring to the examination papers (set in November, 1874) for clerkships and supplementary clerkships, in the Home

Civil Service, one is at a loss to understand, in what way a candidate can be expected to prove his fitness for any duties that could possibly devolve upon him, by answering even in the most faultless and laudable manner such questions as were in the above instance propounded in geography—viz. :—

1. On what does the direction of rivers depend? Show from your answer, how it is, that so few, and those not by any means large rivers, flow towards the West.

4. Describe, or draw a map of, the principal mountain ranges in Europe.

10. Draw a map of British India, indicating the boundaries of the three Presidencies.

In history, the candidate was expected to give the precise meaning of the name "Anglo-Saxon," and to be able to write an account of the reign of Ina of Wessex—to explain the principal provisions of the peace of Pecquigni, &c., &c. At another examination held in June, 1875, the future clerks or supplementary clerks, had to write essays, "filling not less than two folio pages" (time allowed, two hours), on one or other of these subjects (1) The Arctic Expedition; (2) National games; (3) "A rolling stone gathers no moss." A still more interesting essay might have been suggested, showing in what possible way, an accumulation of moss could be beneficial to the stone!

Take, again, the examinations in English literature, for candidates seeking admission to the Royal Military Academy or first appointments in the Army. Certain subjects are given out, such as Chaucer's "Knight's Tale," Shakespeare's "Othello," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," Bacon's Essays. The examination in English history will perhaps be limited to the period between 1740 and 1792. As soon as the subjects are known, off go the candidates to some "coach" or crammer celebrated for getting the greatest number of his pupils "through." He knows exactly all the catch questions on each subject likely to be set, and in due course the beneficial effect of this kind of training manifests itself satisfactorily enough,

if the "patient" be but blessed with a retentive memory. Some few hundred marks above the obligatory number are attained, the pupil is congratulated on his application and industry, and the renown of the "coach" is yet further enhanced. But what are the plain facts? Instead of any real proficiency in the general literature and history of his country; all that the "having passed" proves, is that the candidate has succeeded in filling his head temporarily with a number of answers to certain stock questions that were pretty sure to be set, and has scribbled them out legibly, within the prescribed hours. These answers being of no further use, will speedily fade from the memory, and with them, will depart all that their possessor ever knew of English literature and English history! The honour examinations at both Universities are open to the same unfavourable comment. No examination can be deemed to be of any value, that does not elicit all that the candidate actually knows. An examiner, fit for the task, will above all things eschew the silly vanity of making a parade of his own attainments—of setting "catch questions"—or problems that are little better than charades, and often have little, if any, reference to the subject specially under consideration. Take, for instance, at random, a few of the questions from a "mathematical tripos" paper, containing some two-and-twenty others, all to be answered in three hours, and let any competent and impartial individual candidly say, of what real subsequent value, is the kind of ability likely to prove, which has been trained to cope successfully with them.

A picture is hung against a rough vertical wall by a string fastened to a point in its back, so that the picture inclines forwards; apply the principle of the triangle of forces, to find the inclination of the string to the wall, when its tension is the least possible.

A carriage is travelling along a level road; prove that the sum of the squares of the shadows cast on the ground, by any two spokes of a wheel, which are at right angles to each other, varies during the journey, as the square of the secant of the sun's zenith distance.

A ball is projected from the middle of one side of a billiard-table, so as to strike in succession one of the sides adjacent to it, the side opposite to it, and

a ball placed in the centre of the table ; show that, if a and b be the lengths of the sides of the table, and e the elasticity of the ball, the inclination of the direction of projection to the side a of the table from which it is projected must be

$$\tan^{-1} \left\{ \frac{b}{a} \frac{1 + 2e}{1 + e} \right\}.$$

One of the candidates at the examination, in the Senate House, whereat this problem was propounded, disposed of it somewhat summarily, if not satisfactorily, by saying that the conclusion indicated "*was self-evident.*"

A fish is floating in a cubical glass tank filled with water, with his head in one corner and his tail towards the one diagonally opposite ; describe the appearance which will be presented, to an eye looking towards the corner, in the direction of the length of the fish, and in the same horizontal plane with it.

To this, one answer given—though probably not the one calculated to obtain the highest number of marks—was ; "*Have the fish photographed before he moves, and you will get his appearance exactly.*"

A rigid spherical shell is filled with homogeneous inelastic fluid, every particle of which attracts every other, with a force varying inversely as the square of the distance ; show that the difference between the pressures at the surface and at any point within the fluid, varies as the area of the least section through the point.

A small light is placed in the focus of a perfect reflector in the form of a paraboloid of revolution ; prove that the brightness, due to reflection, at any point within the volume of the paraboloid, varies inversely, as the square of the focal distance of the end of the diameter through the point.

"*It does not admit of a doubt,*" was the remark elicited from one candidate for honours, on the perusal of the problem. The one, however, who went more fully into the subject and who answered correctly, the greatest number of the 178 questions set during the week, over which the examination extended, became, in due course, senior wrangler.

Few, who have not undergone the drudgery, can form even an approximate idea of the years of arduous and incessant toil previously requisite, to discipline the mind and adapt it for the successful consideration of subjects such as these. Yet the business is now all reduced to a system, and though, year by

year, the "papers" become more and more abstruse, judicious "coaching" will yield results, in the main, similar to what it did twenty or thirty years ago, though probably at the present time, to obtain a first class in the "Little-go" is about as difficult, as the examination for honours was, in 1763, the year that Paley was senior wrangler.

But a question here naturally arises; is any *undoubted* benefit discernible from the ever-increasing difficulties with which the path to honours is yearly strewn? Does the severe ordeal imposed by the University, conduce to adequate results? Nearly one hundred and forty years have sped away since the mathematical tripos was instituted. Of all those who have gained the highest attainable distinction in mathematics, have there been any considerable number, who have subsequently maintained their University distinction?

Archdeacon Wrangham, in his *Sertum Cantabrigiense*, privately printed in 1824, gave a list of all who had taken honours at Cambridge from 1754 to 1823. Of two thousand nine hundred names, thus registered, comparatively few succeeded in attaining positions of eminence afterwards, or distinguished themselves later. Of the seventy senior wranglers, few can be said to have made their mark in the world. Among those of the present century* were—1801, Henry Martyn (of St. John's), the Missionary; 1804, Dr. Kaye (of Christ's), Bishop of Lincoln; 1805, Dr. Turton (of St. Catherine's), Bishop of Ely; 1806, Sir Frederick Pollock (of Trinity), Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer; 1808, Mr. Bickersteth (of Caius, afterwards Lord Langdale), Master of the Rolls; 1809, Baron Alderson (Caius); 1810, Mr. Justice Maule (Trinity);

* The number of senior wranglers produced by different colleges, during the present century—*i.e.*, from 1800 to 1878 both inclusive—stands as follows:—St. John's, 31; Trinity, 26; Caius, 7; Queen's, 5; St. Peter's, 4; St. Catherine's, 2; Christ's, 2; Pembroke, 1; Trinity Hall, 1. Neither Clare, Corpus, Downing, Emmanuel, Magdalen, Sidney Sussex, King's, nor Jesus, have turned out one senior wrangler, since 1799.

1813, Sir John Herschel (St. John's), Master of the Mint; 1818, Sir J. Lefevre (Trinity), Clerk of the Parliaments; 1823, Professor Airy (Trinity), Astronomer Royal; 1825, Professor Challis (Trinity), Plumian Professor; 1828, Dr. Charles Perry (Trinity), Bishop of Melbourne.

Among the second wranglers, between whom, and the first, the examiners have frequently had much difficulty in deciding, were Dr. Peacock, the late Dean of Ely, Dr. Whewell, the late Master of Trinity, Dr. Bowstead, late Bishop of Lichfield, Dr. Colenso, Bishop of Natal, the Duke of Devonshire, Canon Heaviside, Dr. Goodwin, Dean of Ely, and the late Charles Mackenzie, Missionary Bishop to Central Africa.

But beyond these; scarcely any others have subsequently reached positions of eminence, many of them having been distanced by competitors, whose academic career was not characterised by successful competition for honours. Certainly not the least remarkable of the illustrious band of living honour men, is Mr. Routh of Peterhouse, who, not content with having himself attained as senior wrangler and first Smith's prizeman, the highest mathematical distinctions the University could confer, has ever since—and it must be admitted with marvellous success—been turning out wranglers wholesale. This year, the senior and the three next, were indebted in a great measure to his educational talents, and for the aid afforded by him, to their natural abilities, for the proud positions they at present occupy.

Similar observations apply to the classical examinations, both at Cambridge and the sister University. They fail to elicit the possession of extensive general information, but rather appear to aim, almost invariably, at obtaining replies that only tend to show, the acquisition, on the part of the candidate, of scraps of comparatively useless lore, of no intrinsic importance whatever.

It may be much questioned, too, whether any real benefit

is derivable from the devotion of some of the brightest and most important years of a boy's life, to the acquisition of such a facility in Greek and Latin versification as shall enable him to run off in an hour—without the help of *gradus* or dictionary—either into Greek iambics or Latin lyrics, Shelley's beautiful "Ode of Pan," or five-and-twenty lines from Marlowe's "Queen of Carthage." In all human probability, from the time he arrays himself in his B.A. gown, till he is gathered to his ancestors, he will never put pen to paper, to give utterance to any classical sonnet again, and the faculty, it cost so much indefatigable labour to gain, having served its purpose, is never more, called into requisition, unless haply, like a well-known prelate, of whom the following anecdote is recorded, he should seek to while a dreary hour on a railway platform, by turning the advertisements on the walls, into Latin "longs and shorts." It is said that the reverend individual in question, being twitted by a brother bishop, on the probability of his having lost the facility of versification he once possessed at Eton, "I don't know that I have *quite* lost it," he replied, "suppose I try my hand at yon advertisement," pointing to two lines in flaming scarlet capitals, under a gigantic wood-cut, designated as:—"The easy fitting, world-renowned, ventilating, grease-proof hat." His Lordship, in a few moments, wrote on a slip of paper, the following critically literal rendering of the original:

Pileus hic, habilis gestu, notusque per orbem

Quo penetrat ventus, nec penetrabit adeps!

For all this, nevertheless, there is a steadily advancing opinion, at both Universities, that far too much time has hitherto been bestowed on cramming and on committing to memory trivialities of no consequence in any way.

The late Sir Francis Head, used to say, that he had been severely punished when at Eton, for not knowing where the Scamander was; a river that he had often subsequently walked across, without wetting his ankles; adding that when, in later

years, he visited South America, he there came upon a river, five times as wide as from Dover to Calais, the very name or existence of which he had never even heard alluded to, at school!

Amplly sufficient instances, have already been adduced, of the ludicrous results even of long courses of Board school instruction. It may possibly be thought, that these have been culled with difficulty and are only rare instances of fatuity or imbecility. The direct reverse of this, however, happens to be the case; from the mass of materials at hand, they might have been extended, so as to have filled a large volume. It would in fact be far more difficult to cite cases, where Board school teaching, can be really proved to have produced any observable benefit. The public elementary scholar, during the whole period of his training, is a pestilent nuisance to the neighbourhood he frequents. By association without restraint with idle, dissolute street roughs, his language, his habits and demeanour necessarily soon become as bad as theirs. When the Board school has done its best and its worst for him, those who have once had experience of his idle ways, and evil propensities, will take care not to subject themselves again, to his insolence or his speculations. "No—no," said a large employer of youthful labour, the other day, "none of your Board-school vermin for me, I've suffered enough from those young blackguards. I have tried a score or so, of them, and find them all alike—a parcel of thievish, impudent vagabonds, who idle and loiter about, wasting their time over profligate periodicals, shirking their work and pilfering all they can lay their hands upon." In nine cases out of ten, whether employed as shop-boys, errand-boys, pages or what not, the verdict is much the same.

Professor Huxley says "every ship captain knows, that no sailor was ever the worse for possessing a trained intelligence," very possibly not, but at the same time, there is not a captain either in the Navy or in the Merchant Service,

who would not infinitely prefer shipping an A.B. who knew his duty, but could not read or write, rather than one of those pests of the service, "sea lawyers" as they are termed, who has had a smattering of schooling, and whose chief delight usually consists in setting a ship's company by the ears. For similar prudential reasons, the recruiting sergeant will always prefer an unlettered rustic, to the conceited candidate for the ranks, who can write "a hand like copper-plate," and is well up in all the minutiae of a merchant's office.

Whither then, asks Common sense—are we to turn, to discover the benefits, the country has derived, in return for nearly twenty millions of hard gold it has bestowed during the last forty years on this costly mockery of education? We do find certainly, that 27·3 per cent. of the time of each child, is given to reading and spelling, only, and that these two accomplishments alone, miserably acquired as they usually are, exceed in cost, one million a year in England and Wales! What a humiliating contrast, to the quiet unpretentious and self-supporting school systems to be found in Belgium, and other parts of the Continent, turning out as they do, year by year, numbers of thrifty, well-instructed, orderly and well-conducted mechanics, capable at once of supporting themselves by their skilled labour or eagerly sought, for domestic service!

If researches be instituted, with a view to ascertain what change education has brought about during the last forty years in the condition, character, conduct and demeanour of "the intelligent working man," the reply from all quarters, is decidedly unfavourable. In no one respect is improvement discernible in the class; on the contrary, marked deterioration is unmistakably perceptible in every grade. Increase of wages is uniformly accompanied by a diminution of production, and inferiority in the quality of the work turned out. Reduction of the hours of labour, is invariably attended with increased indolence and a marked and scarcely disguised determination to shirk anything like manly

or energetic exertion. The weekly pay is claimed as a matter of right, while the work—at best—reluctantly rendered in return, is regarded as a gracious concession granted by way of favour. The great object now-a-days, with all the working classes, would appear to be:—in the first place, to do as little as possible, and to “scamp” that little, in every way, so long as immediate detection and dismissal can be evaded. Secondly. It would seem to be a point of honour with them to create work for each other. A bricklayer set to replace a broken slate upon a roof, will usually contrive to damage the lead pipes or gutters, in order to make a job for a plumber. The plumber, if he does not burn the house to the ground, will manage to cut away or damage a joist, so that the carpenter must be sent for, to make good the mischief. The carpenter will most likely drop his tool-basket on to a skylight, and so give honest employment to his friend the glazier. In this way, it is, that a trivial repair that ought not to have cost, half a dozen shillings, will frequently run up to as many pounds.

The dishonest idleness of the educated workman, when paid by the day, is the subject of continual complaint. “The London householder,” says the *Saturday Review*, “quails at the idea of a gasfitter or plumber entering his house, almost as much as he would, at the idea of going to bed and leaving his hall door open. The workman is not a burglar by profession, and may not carry anything out of the house but his tools and the housemaid’s affections, yet he probably manages to rob his employer as effectually, as if he had stolen a purse off the study table. He does not do his own work so that it will last, and he makes needless work for others like himself. Working men will, no doubt, be indignant at any one who accuses them of being thieves and robbers; nevertheless—if we may assume that their proceedings are correctly described by various correspondents of the *Building News*—they, by their systematic determination to do as little work as possible,

take money out of the pockets of their employers very much as the pickpockets do. Most people who live in a large town can scarcely fail to have witnessed scenes similar to that described by Mr. Martin in the *Building News* as daily visible from a window in an 'observatory' at Queen Anne's Gate, overlooking the tops of a great many houses in the neighbourhood. Mr. Martin has, it seems, amused himself with watching the workmen, who, though ostensibly engaged in repairing the roofs and the chimneys, sit calmly conversing together, or stretched at full length for greater ease, in the leaden gutters smoking a pipe. They apparently take no interest in anything beyond the movements of the labourer who combines 'outpost duty' with that of 'commissariat,' and brings them the two ever needful B's, bacca and beer, especially necessary to their complete enjoyment of the fine view before them. In one of his observations, Mr. Martin saw a man asleep, 'dreaming the happy hours away' on a narrow scaffolding 30ft. from the ground. Forgetting the habits of the race, he rushed in his simplicity, to rescue the man from this dangerous position. At the bottom of the scaffolding was the bricklayer's mate, who calmed his anxiety at once by coolly informing him, 'Lor' bless you, he's safe enough; he's accustomed to it.' To this anecdote Mr. Martin adds an amusing account, of the way things go on in country parts, where the foreman can always find some excuse for an excursion to the railway station to inquire for something wanting only, in his imagination. He does not leave, without having tested the quality of the refreshment-room tap in no imaginary manner. A foreman naturally always requires a labourer with him, even to make inquiries. When to this constant wilful waste of time, we add the fact that a bricklayer can, by working with only one hand (no uncommon practice), make a yard-cube of brickwork cost 32s., it will not seem so surprising that those who build houses can seldom afford to live in them. A friend of Mr. Martin's one day during working hours, found

all the men, whom he supposed to be hard at work with hammer and trowel, exerting themselves with much more than their usual energy, in the capacity of negro melodists. The unsophisticated country folk looked on, delighted with the blackened faces, the mad capers, and shouts of their Cockney cousins. The men had quite forgotten the very unimportant fact, that they were paid by the hour, to build a house, not to improvise an entertainment for their employer's tenants on the village-green. Mr. Martin's experience leads him to affirm that the working man at day-work, is a deliberate idler when he has the chance, and that the percentage of men anxious to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wages is so small, as to be hardly worth taking into account, except to acknowledge the few instances, as those exceptions which prove a rule. Another gentleman (Mr. Seddon) complains, that he cannot now, except at an enormous increase in cost, have the designs executed which he made use of some years ago. Contractors tell him, that they have now to leave so large a margin to provide for the dishonesty of their workmen, that they are obliged to give apparently extravagant estimates. They are forced to pay higher wages, and also to accept much less work in return. It is the public who suffer in the long run. At Sheffield the other day two bricklayers, assisted by two labourers, were timed when at work, and in twenty minutes the four men succeeded in accomplishing the wonderful feat of laying just five bricks. These, of course, were union men. On the other hand, on a railway work in Wales, where the men were out of sight of union officials, a gang of bricklayers agreed to do as much as they could, and to discard the rule of never allowing the trowel to leave the right hand. Two men kept placing the bricks with both hands, and the third used the trowel. In this way they earned 12s. 6d. a day each, and sometimes 15s."

A master builder, remonstrated with lately, for sending in

a demand of astounding magnitude, in respect of what was originally a most trumpery affair, admitted the imputation—but shrugging his shoulders—added; that he was in the hands of his men, whom he knew, well enough, to be a set of worthless rogues, but with any one of whom, if he ventured to remonstrate, the whole batch would instantly pack up their tools and leave him, most probably putting him besides, under a ban, and prohibiting other men from working for him. “They are nearly all,” added he, “thoroughly and incorrigibly bad. The worst and most troublesome, however, are those who have had the benefit of a course of ‘schooling.’ They set themselves up above the others, tell you to your face, that they are just as good as you are, insult and defy you, work as little as they please, do their work as carelessly as they can, stop away when they think proper, going off for days together on ‘the spree,’ during the whole of which time they are usually roaring drunk, and if they escape being sent to gaol; when they return, with aching heads and quaking hands, the work they turn out, is so bad, that it generally has to be done over again. These are mostly unionists, and hang together like thieves. They pretend that they own no master, and only when it suits them, have recourse to an ‘employer.’ Nevertheless, there is not a man who joins a union, that is not as complete a slave, as any nigger ever was. He is bound down, body and soul and compelled to obey the dictates of a little gang of pettifogging tyrants of his own class, who live in clover, on contributions they compel him to pay out of his earnings. He can only sell his labour, when and where they may allow him, and upon such terms as they may choose to fix! If ready and willing to work for 5s. a day, he must not accept a farthing less than 7s., and the poor slave must vegetate, as best he can, on a paltry allowance of from 16s. to 18s. a week, perhaps for many months together; while he might creditably and readily be earning 30s. or 40s. There are at this

moment in our trade over 600 idle rascals, who have scarcely earned an honest shilling for six months past. Probably more than half of them would be only too glad, to take what work there is, on any terms, rather than waste their time in indolence. But not one of them, dare say his soul's his own. They must starve on a pittance, little more than the wages of a farm labourer, till the slave-drivers, think proper to let them go back to their trade."

The foreman and manager of a large factory who had filled those offices for nearly thirty years, having had the superintendence of some six hundred men, on being asked, the result of his experience and his opinion, as to the relative value to an employer, of educated and uneducated hands, replied, that he would not have a man about the place, if he could help it, who could read or write. "The others are bad enough, goodness knows, but as for them, cantankerous, lazy, loafing rascals, who are always trying to get into a corner on the sly, and smoke, or read some trashy journal or other, they are idling half their time, and you never get three days' real work out of them in a whole week. No, sir! never if you can help it, have anything to do with one of those educated blackguards. He is the most gin-drinkingest, beer-swillingest, pipe-smokingest, work-shirkingest, wife-beatingest, insolentest scoundrel that you can have to deal with. When he isn't sotting, he's poisoning his mind with trash, and I never knew one of those fellows, to open a book or read a paper that I would allow to come within my doors. Sometimes we take on a few boys from these new-fangled Government schools, but they get worse and worse every year; we can never make anything of 'em. They know nothing, and are too conceited to learn,—then they're, a good few of them, big thieves. I don't believe there's a thing about the place they wouldn't prig if they wern't sharply watched."

This is the unbiassed and verbatim testimony of a practical

man who could have no object in traducing the people amongst whom his lot was cast. It is unfortunately no isolated case; similar opinions are freely and unreservedly expressed, without exception, by every employer of labour, whose opinion has been sought. The two here cited, however, are selected because they embody the opinions of all who have been consulted. Those who are so enamoured of the Board School system, that they will hear nothing to its disparagement, have only to put a few simple queries to any one, who has had under his control, large bodies of mechanics, in order to be satisfied of the well-founded dislike, entertained by all denominations of employers for the "educated workman." It is much akin to the general abhorrence, on the part of colonists and settlers, in which those natives are held, who have undergone a course of methodist schooling. For instance; the "unsophisticated Caffre," said one who had lived amongst them eighteen years in the Orange river, free State, "is an excellent, well-conducted, obedient and faithful servant. He is usually trustworthy, quiet and diligent in his vocation, anxious to please, and ready at all times to exert himself on behalf of his master. But take any one of those, whom the dissenting missionaries have had in hand, and the nature of the man is found invariably to have been completely altered, his pristine docility is changed into insolent insubordination, his natural honesty is converted into crafty thievishness, and the many good points he had originally, appear to have been totally erased. The reports from other parts of the world are unfortunately much to the same effect. As regards the adult aborigines of any country, missionary operations have very rarely been attended with salutary results.

Nor can we marvel much, that this should be the case, when we consider the diversity of conflicting creeds and the bitter animosity subsisting between the emissaries of different sects, many of whom "continually compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, make him twofold more the child of hell than themselves."

There are, at this present time in England, no less than one hundred and fifty-four totally distinct creeds; each possessing, duly certified and registered places of worship or meeting, and including in the above number, Humanitarians, Mormons, Revivalists, Christian Elianites, Christian Israelites, Glassites, Bands of Glory, Progressionists, Ranters, Spiritualists, Swedenborgians, Joanna Southcottians, Arminians, Plymouth Brethren, &c., each—in all probability—entertaining for all the rest, as deadly and irreconcilable a hatred as that which for centuries has subsisted between the Greek and the Latin Churches. The antipathy between any one and all the rest of these different sects, indeed, can scarcely be better or more comprehensively expressed in words, than it is, in a verse of a Ranter's hymn wherein the severity of the anathema is only exceeded by its impartial catholicity:—

“ We are the true, elected few,
 May all the rest be damned;
 There's room enough in Hell for you,
 We *won't* have Heaven too crammed. (!)”

Some little time since, a Parsee of much natural shrewdness and ability, who had been educated in Europe, and had studied two years at Oxford; speaking English, French and Italian fluently; having been repeatedly urged, by the representatives of different creeds, to embrace the particular one, each in turn pressed upon his consideration; replied ingenuously enough—“ You all tell me in turns, that yours is the only true faith, without accepting which, no one can possibly be saved; and yet you, who cannot any two of you, agree among yourselves as to what the true doctrines are, that I ought to adopt, expect that I—who have been brought up in a simple religion admitting of no such doubts and uncertainties—should at once be able to do so. No—first endeavour rather to reconcile amongst yourselves, your present conflicting notions, and I shall then be in a position to judge in what respects, if any, your religion is preferable to my own.”

“You may rely upon it,” added he, “that nothing has retarded the spread of Christianity in modern times, more than the variety of its sects, most of them professing doctrines in direct opposition to each other. So much so in fact, that the members of one denomination, have frequently assured me, that none but themselves and their followers have any chance of salvation. Now I have studied the whole of your Scriptures very carefully, and have even made a translation, into my own language, of the four Gospels, and of course they comprise all that any one can possibly know on the subject of Christianity. Admirable, unquestionably, is the moral code therein inculcated, and it is impossible even to imagine any grander, nobler or more exalted character, than that of the founder of your religion. But I can discern nothing in his teachings as handed down, that could possibly warrant very many of the doctrines that have since been engrafted upon them.

“It is not many days, since an eminent divine of your Church, happening in conversation, to allude to the subject of the Trinity, I remarked that neither the word, nor the ideas it conveys, nor the doctrine it implies, were even once alluded to in the Gospels, nor was it so much as invented till the middle of the second century. ‘Oh! but,’ replied he, ‘it was, I assure you, always understood and accepted from the first, as an indisputable fact, and consequently no one could venture to deny it now, without infallibly consigning himself to perdition. Pray ponder carefully over that matchless theological composition, the Athanasian Creed, which deserves to be inscribed on golden tablets. Without being inspired, it contains the whole essence of Christianity, couched in the most simple and faultless language.’ ‘How came it then,’ I replied, ‘that that eminent divine and theologian, Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, alluded to the Athanasian Creed, in the following terms? He—said to have been one of the most eminent dignitaries of your Church—denounces it as:—“A motley monster of bigotry and superstition,

a scarecrow of shreds and patches, dressed up of old, by philosophers and popes, to amuse the speculative, and affright the ignorant; now a butt of scorn, against which, every unfledged witling, essays his wanton efforts, and before he has learned his catechism, is fixed an infidel for life!" This was the deliberate opinion of a Regius professor of divinity too. No,' I continued, 'you may be well assured; and your St. Hilary wrote, some fourteen centuries ago, to the effect: that these creeds are dangerous things. They are made arbitrarily, and explained still more arbitrarily. You make new creeds every year; you repent of what you have done; you defend those who retract; then anathematise those you have defended; you condemn the doctrine of others in yourself, and your own in others, and reciprocally rending each other in pieces, invoke the ridicule or the commiseration of the beholders.' Now," continued the Parsee, 'your missionaries import their conflicting doctrines into other countries, and profess to endeavour to bring men over, to one particular set of opinions, while they themselves are utterly unable to reconcile their own differences. I have been in every province in India, and speak several Oriental languages, I have travelled in nearly every quarter of the globe, and have taken great pains to investigate the results of missionary work under a variety of circumstances. The conclusion I have invariably been induced to form, is, that with very rare exceptions, the adult converts, come from the ranks of those, who previously had neither religion nor character, and who consented to be baptised, because they thought some personal benefit would accrue to them, or that the missionaries would be bound for the future to support them. Depend upon it, it is altogether a delusion to suppose that the spread of Christianity has been aided by missionaries, to any appreciable extent."

This opinion, unfortunately, seems confirmed by the experience of almost all impartial travellers, endowed even with ordinary powers of observation. In Earle's *Residence in New*

Zealand an amusing anecdote is given, conveying the reply of a number of native chieftains to some missionaries, to whom the natives had listened patiently, during a long exposition of the new tenets. The preachers had of course expatiated on the horrors of the infernal regions with their eternal fire, sulphur and torments. The audience at length unanimously announced their resolution to have nothing to do with such a religion. "The horrible punishments you have described," they said, "can only be intended for white men; no doubt they have been well deserved. Happily for us, none of our people have ever merited such dreadful treatment; but, as we have heard with great attention, all you have been telling us, we think the least you can do for us, is to give us each, a blanket and a bottle of rum."

But while England is blessed with one hundred and fifty-four different religions, the advanced liberals, in educated Germany, have startled Europe by the bold and unblushing announcement of the existence of a very numerous and formidably-increasing sect—though perhaps professing no very new doctrines—their chief tenets being, avowed hatred of mankind in general—combined with a denial of the immortality of the soul and of a future state. The members of this community, declare war to the knife against all existing institutions, more especially against Christianity. They repudiate all creeds, maintain that there is nothing to live for, but the pleasures and enjoyments of this life, and as regards the rights of property, advocate the communistic doctrine of the Parisian socialists of 1871; or of the brigands, thieves and plunderers of any period of the world's history. Education in Germany has assuredly given birth to an organisation of utterly unprincipled ruffians, to whom it would be worse than folly, to show consideration or lenity in any form, for the least infraction of the law. A few days since, a body of them, over ten thousand in number, followed to the grave, one of the disciples of the above detest-

able doctrines. They all wore revolutionary badges, and made speeches, openly declaratory of their principles and intentions. In 1871 these miscreants had influence enough to send, by means of 120,000 votes, two members to the German Parliament; in 1877 they registered 497,000 votes, and returned no less than *twelve* members in a Parliament of 398 seats only. Nearly one-tenth of all the votes given throughout the country were socialistic. There are already more than fifty journals advocating their views, while smaller papers, circulated for the same purpose, are being daily disseminated broadcast over the land by hundreds of thousands. "Not only," says the *Times*, "religion and property, but patriotism and the sympathy of race are disavowed. It is the dream of transforming human society into an aggregation of animals," (or rather of beasts of prey,) "equal in their mediocrity, and caring for nothing but the food of the day, which seems to have cast its disastrous spell over a large portion of German cities."

The Berlin correspondent of the *Times* affirms that:—"There is no perceptible difference between these teachings and those that led to the French commune. Indeed, the German communists have never concealed their sympathy with the doings of their French prototypes. It is quite customary for German socialistic papers to excuse and justify the Paris outbreak of 1871. Men's minds are waking up to the astounding phenomenon which has so suddenly shot up in their midst. If the matter has not excited more interest before, it was, that the aim avowed, appeared too mad to deserve notice. But the method in the madness, has been too manifest to be ignored any longer. It is felt that, though the aim is unattainable, the injuries wrought, in the vain attempt, to compass the end, require to be dealt with."

Let it not however be assumed for a moment, that this phase of advanced liberalism, is by any means monopolised by Germany. It is spreading through all countries. The san-

guinary consequences of its having been suffered to gain a temporary mastery, in America, though but for a few days, are fresh in the memories of all men. Its triumph in Paris for six weeks, was attended with pillage and devastation, that entailed a loss of more than twenty-seven millions sterling on the country; but the snake was unfortunately only scotched, not slain. There are said to be, more than a hundred thousand hands in that capital, and perhaps a still larger number, in London, who would only be too certain to come forward, were an opportunity afforded them, to enact similar scenes again, and to glory the while in the havoc and bloodshed they would cause.

To return, however, to the British artisan and his ways. Nothing can afford more stringent evidence of the extreme fatuity of vast numbers of these men, than the extension, throughout the country, of trades-unionism. It implies a dogged and avowed determination, on the part of the members of these associations—

1. To do as little work as possible themselves, and at the same time to consume as much as they can, of the produce of others.

2. Steadfastly to uphold the principle, that it is the bounden duty of every working man, to eschew all pride in the excellence of his productions, and to bestow no more pains or care, on any work entrusted to him, than will just suffice to prevent its rejection.

3. To exact, by every means, be they fair or foul, the same remuneration, for the most incompetent as for the best workman.

4. To insist on claiming the benefits of competition and free-trade, in every commodity but that of labour, which happens to be the only one, the working classes have to bring to market, and to insist upon the most rigid protection for that, from all competition. The introduction of foreign labour is

specifically denounced as "unjust, unconstitutional, and unpatriotic." (!)

5. To claim an indefeasable right to fix the prices, at which labour of all kinds, and in every trade, is to be bought and sold.

Here are the actual rules of the Labourers' Trade Society in the Staffordshire potteries, from which the reader will have no difficulty in forming a pretty accurate judgment, as to the principles on which they are founded :—

"CAUTION.—Any member violating the following resolutions will be considered a traitor to the society :—

"1. You are strictly cautioned to take no member's place, who turns out for just and lawful rights, or go into any other place where a strike may be in contemplation.

"2. You are also cautioned to take no undermining advantage of your fellow-labourer, by offering yourselves at lower wages than the regular rate of wages fixed by the committee of this society.

"3. You are cautioned to take no other man to work, but he who carries one of these contribution cards.

"4. Any member allowing himself to run, above two months' contribution in arrears on the card, shall not be entitled to the protection of this society.

"5. You are strictly cautioned not to outstep good rules by doing double the work you are required, and causing others to do the same in order to gain a smile from your master. Such foolhardy and deceitful actions, leave a great portion of good members out of employment the year round. Certain individuals have been guilty, who will be expelled if they do not refrain."

These are the leading tenets of most of the much talked-of trades-unions. Admirable institutions, unquestionably, so long as they discharged their original and laudable functions, of providing succour and maintenance, in time of sickness, of scarcity of work, or of old age, but ruinously mischievous to their members, when they began dictatorially to affect legislative functions. The majority of those who remodelled and regulated these associations, if not all those who now support them, must necessarily have received some amount of education or of mental training, however ill-directed, yet it is strange to find, men endowed even with the humblest reasoning faculties, incapable of discerning the sophistry, not to say the

suicidal folly, of the principles they are banded together to uphold. Although for years past, the evils of strikes, and their impotence for good, have been, plainly apparent, as the sun at noon, to all impartial spectators, and must by this time be patent to many of the poor, deluded "slaves" themselves, they have not the courage or the manliness to shake off the self-imposed yoke, nor to discard the petty tyrants, who alone profit by their supine credulity! But alas! "there is no charlatan, how ridiculous soever may be his pretensions—when tried by the light of sober reason—that doth not find his followers, even in this age of fancied enlightenment." An age of enlightenment, nevertheless, in which hundreds of thousands of intelligent and educated workmen hug themselves, with the fond belief, that they forsooth, have it in their power to fix the price of labour and to regulate the profits of workmen not only in this country but throughout the world! This was seen to be literally the case, not long since, when it was hinted that the daily wages of an English mechanic, would be only too gladly accepted as a handsome remuneration in Japan, for a week's work, by a workman, far more expert and in many respects more skilful. The secretary of some union, forthwith threatened the inauguration of a "vast international conspiracy" for the express purpose of declaring war, against capital, in every part of the globe.

A shrewd firm of Glasgow shipbuilders however, quietly adopted the suggestion, and are having all the cabinet-work and fittings of the "Gallia," and of some other large steamers they are building, made for them at Yokohama.

Mr. Brunton, who was among the first civil engineers employed in Japan, and had ample opportunities of judging of the abilities of the different native artisans and mechanics during his residence there, before they had any knowledge of European modes of workmanship, after having erected over 40 important public buildings, in which the general

finish of the work was equal to anything in this country; expresses the highest opinion of their wonderful aptitude and intelligence. At first, an English foreman was placed over about 50 carpenters, and gave them general directions and instructions regarding a class of work which was, in many respects, new to them. Latterly, owing to the efficiency of the native foremen, European assistance was altogether dispensed with. Specimens, which have been brought to this country, speak to the extreme neatness and nicety of their work, while the expedition with which it is executed, is fairly comparable with that of an English workman. He adds, that any number of the best men would jump at any reasonable offer to come to this country, so great is the desire among all classes, to visit Europe. Their wages, in Japan, range from 50 to 75 cents per day. Mr. Brunton speaks highly of their tractability, sobriety and their gay, joyous, childlike good-nature, and feels confident that no difficulty would be likely to arise which would prevent the successful introduction of these men. That such a step may be successful, however, it would, he thinks, be necessary in the first place, that no attempts be made, to transform them into European carpenters, and that they themselves be prevented from doing so. They must work with their own tools, which in many important essentials are different from ours, and after their own methods, one of which is to work on the floor and without a bench. They should, as far as possible, retain their own apparel, eat their usual food, and be lodged together—such being, in his opinion, the great secret of the success of the Chinese communities in America; and, in the second place, it is all-important, that the work of selection should be entrusted to one thoroughly conversant with the country and the habits of the people.

These suggestions are simple and practical. An importation, consequently, of a few hundreds of these men, content to work at a fifth of the rate that unionists demand, would prove pretty

clearly, that the public have it quite in their power to put a stop to their unprincipled extortions.

Shipbuilding, as is well known, has been all but driven away by successive strikes, from the Thames. It is said, from the same cause, to be gradually departing from the Clyde and the Tyne, and how can this be wondered at, when we find, that a vessel, which could not be built here, under £16,000, can be turned out, in every respect as good, and in some, far better, in Italy, for £6,000?

It might have been supposed, that after such protracted hostilities, and so many ignominious defeats, the conviction would have forced itself ere this, upon the minds of those interested, had they any reasoning power, that it is, after all, the consumer alone, who is, and must always be, the arbiter of prices.

Free trade and successive strikes, have together been doing their best for some years past, to bring about the only result it was possible they could achieve. One branch of manufacture after another, is being driven from these shores, and it may—with tolerable certainty be predicted—with little chance of ever returning. In the words of the Chairman of the London and North-Western Railway Company at the general meeting on the 23rd of February last; “we find ourselves undersold by the foreigner in our own markets, in glass, in manufactured iron, slates, paper, nails, screws and in numberless other articles of daily consumption. There must be something very wrong,” he added, “in what is going on amongst us to-day, or else the foreigner would never be able to beat us, on our own ground, and in our own manufactures. I believe that it is largely owing to the regulations of the Government (in other words free-trade) and the restrictions of the trades-unions. I calculate that a loss of the labour, of something like a million or a million and a half of men, has followed the restrictions which the trades-unions put upon their members with regard to the work they do, and the hours they work. The only fear I have

with regard to this country is, that the trades-unions and the Government regulations, because of their interference with every act of the manufacturers in the country, will do that which has been done, all through the world's history—viz., in their attempts to regulate trade which cannot be regulated, they will drive that trade out of the country, because capital is of no country, and will not stay anywhere to be regulated. You cannot regulate prices, and unless the difficulties and differences between the workpeople and their masters can be settled by working cordially together, every man doing his work with all his might, and to the best of his ability (because the men of to-day do little more than half they can do), the foreigner will most assuredly step in and do the work."

The consumer will spend just so much as he can afford, and no more, upon any one commodity that he requires. Increase the price, and the consumption is either reduced, or recourse is had for supplies, to cheaper markets and to foreign countries.

The public have shown of late pretty significantly, their determination not to submit to extortion or dictation either on the part of workmen, mechanics or tradesmen. Some few years ago, the scandalous exorbitance of the prices of articles of general consumption, charged by a large number of retail dealers in London, caused, in a great measure, by the extravagance of the style in which they thought proper to live, gave rise to the formation of co-operative stores. The West-End shopkeeper, considering that he was entitled to enjoy the same amount of luxury as the richest of his customers, not unfrequently subscribed for a stall or opera-box, set up his suburban villa, his phaeton for day, and his brougham for night work, besides indulging in an occasional Continental trip, or launching out as some did, into the still more serious outlay, attendant upon a yacht, or of an elegant cottage orné, amid the secluded recesses of Brompton, or the ever-verdant Grove of the Baptist. His customers discovered at last, that all the ostenta-

tious expenditure going on around them, came primarily from their pockets. John Bull, proverbially patient and tolerant enough up to a certain point, became at first indignant, then waxing furious, he resolved to dispense with the whole obnoxious tribe, who had for so long, been luxuriating at his expense. As soon as the alternative he had determined upon got abroad, the daily papers teemed with the strongest remonstrances—tradesmen inundated the press with letters indited in the most amicable spirit, replete with the most disinterested advice, and proving incontestably, from the most reliable statistics, that the members of all associations, by embarking in a business of which they had no previous knowledge, requiring the apprenticeship of a life to master, could only bring certain ruin upon themselves, and their friends. Nevertheless, the co-operators went on steadily and undismayed, the Civil Service gallantly showed the way, the Army and Navy followed, the Law, guarded by the “Devil’s Own,” brought up the rear. All collectively and severally, are without exception, prospering, while many are doing an amount of business that at first sight seems incredible. Take for instance the Army and Navy Stores in Victoria Street. They receive, in hard cash, over the counter, and that, without the possibility of risk from bad debts, &c., the astounding sum of *four thousand two hundred pounds per day!* There are several others, with even a still larger number of customers. These associations therefore, are probably turning over, in the aggregate, not less than from two millions and a half to three millions a year. So far from failing, they are paying their working expenses, and yet continue to realise, for their shareholders, 5 per cent. upon the capital originally advanced. Among the warnings above alluded to, the promoters of these undertakings were repeatedly assured that it was impossible for any mercantile concern of the kind to succeed unless the actual net profits were at least from 15 to 20 per cent. It so happens, however, that

a large proportion of the commodities vended, being of a perishable character, and necessarily having to be disposed of, within a few days of their arrival, from the wholesale dealers or the manufacturers, the money paid for them by the purveyors for the store, on the Monday is all recouped, together with the accruing profit, by the following Saturday. So that £100 laid out by the Store, at the beginning of the week and yielding only £102 net, after defraying working expenses, &c., small as the return seems, is really bringing in, without the smallest risk, interest at the rate of £104 per cent., yearly! The tradesman is no doubt at a disadvantage as regards the Store; inasmuch as he has to give credit to some of his customers, and he has besides, to be at the expense not only of sending home to each, the articles they buy, but he has also, to a large extent, to fee dishonest servants in a variety of ways, and to allow them a liberal discount on all bills paid through their intervention. Still, taking such classes of tradesmen, as butchers, fruiterers, fishmongers, bakers or milkmen, nearly the whole of whose stock-in-trade, is renewed and cleared out rapidly, it is easy to see, what enormous profits they must make, if they turn over their capital, only fortnightly or even monthly, and only charge their customers 15 or 20 per cent. thereon, which they avow to be a bare living profit! Supposing them to make no bad debts, and to be doing a good ready-money business, with people who pay regularly every month; 20 per cent. monthly, would yield about 250 per cent. per annum! But strikes, and the unwarrantable charges of tradespeople, have at least had the beneficial effect of rousing and of educating the public, who have taken the proper measures to assert and to maintain the mastery over those who had been suffered too long to trick and cajole them. The general adoption of the co-operative system, has had the further advantage of keeping the expenditure of many a household within due bounds, it is inculcating true habits of economy, and is teaching the rising

generation the invaluable lesson, not to deal on credit; for it effectually prevents them from buying, unless they have in their hands the wherewithal to pay.

When six or seven hundred intelligent London masons, each capable of earning 9d. an hour, thought proper just eight months since, at the bidding of their union leaders, to strike for an extra penny, no difficulty was found in replacing them by better handicraftsmen from abroad. What has been the consequence to themselves? They have already thrown away in wages more than £45,000, which has gone into the pockets of "free-men," while the poor "slaves," to prove their deadly animosity to capital, have consumed their own funds to the extent of more than £25,600. So that this one strike, although affecting comparatively very small numbers, has certainly not cost these misguided dupes less than £70,000; or rather more than £100 a man. In one respect perhaps, the loss to the individuals is probably a gain to the community, for with all their boasted education and intelligence, it is quite as well, that people actuated by the principles they unhesitatingly avow, should not accumulate, or have at their disposal, large hoards, which might be applied to still more evil purposes. The very fact, of their having been able to save so large a sum, out of their wages, for so bad a purpose, proves very clearly that those wages are already excessive. The fund will now soon be exhausted, for the penniless bondsmen, having seen the folly of their conduct, are already anxious to betake themselves to work at the very rate they might have been receiving weekly, ever since last July! They, however, find many of their places occupied by better men, unfettered by the shackles of unionism; more than 300 therefore, have still to hang on, as useless drones, for an indefinite period, supported by involuntary contributions.

Unluckily for them, all the members of the Association of Masters, had long since obtained as many hands as they could employ, all glad enough to work, at or below the old rate.

It had been the frequent boast of the masons' union, that as soon as it should please them to terminate the strike, the members of the union would go back to work and oust the non-unionists from their employ. The Masters' Committee, however, determined that the unionists should not be allowed to carry out that threat, and cautioned the trade generally against the machinations (whether of foremen or others) which might be used towards this end. It would indeed be but a bare act of justice, to retain all the "free and accepted" masons now working, paying them the full value of their labour. The committee of master builders expressed a strong hope that one result of this struggle would be to abolish the rule, of a uniform *minimum* rate of wages, and to promote a perfect freedom of contract between masters and journeymen, as to wages, overtime, piece-work and other matters, independently of arbitrary and pernicious interference of shop-stewards and other trade-union officers.

But there is a still graver consideration, arising from strikes, like the one in question. There is nothing so absolutely free, nothing so intolerant of all assumption and dictation as capital. Its resources and expedients are unlimited, and, what has already happened frequently, in the world's history, will assuredly recur—the unwise authors of these strikes, will find their vocation superseded, and themselves reduced to the condition of mere day-labourers.

That this is no mere visionary apprehension, the following plain facts, from the pen of a civil engineer of experience, abundantly prove :—

"Twenty years ago, masonry, both ashlar and rubble, was almost universally employed in engineering works, where stone was easily procurable, and no work of any magnitude, was ever seen without its huge 'stone-field' and army of hewers busily engaged in stone-dressing. This state of things is now quite the exception. Engineers, wherever practicable, have learnt by this time to make their own stone. The wonderful strides which have been made of late years, in the manufacture of Portland cement at a moderate rate, have brought cement concrete largely into use, wherever gravel or shingle can be

procured, and it is coming more and more into favour every day. Take, for example, the engineering works at Chatham Dockyard. The huge graving docks constructed there years ago were made of solid masonry, and the same material was plentifully employed in the fitting-out basins. Now what do we find? Why, that the walls of the extensive works now under construction, are built, from top to bottom, entirely of concrete, and no more substantial and excellent work can be found in this country. A still more noticeable example of how masonry is gone out of fashion, is to be seen at the gigantic works which the London and St. Katharine Docks Company are carrying out for the extension of their Victoria Dock. The walling of the new dock, some four miles in extent, is being executed entirely in concrete, and by common labourers. The only stonework used, is in the quoins and sills of the entrance lock, and the stones are mostly brought to the work, ready dressed, from the quarries in Cornwall. Probably, in the whole history of engineering, never was there such an immense undertaking carried out, with such an absolute minimum of stonework, and *it cannot fail to be largely imitated in future, whenever circumstances are at all favourable.* Not only does concrete rank among the cheapest and best of building materials, but its use, renders the builder almost wholly independent of skilled labour. In consequence of this the work just mentioned, has been carried on uninterruptedly for the past two years without any fear of strikes on the part of the contractors—navvies and labourers being far too plentiful and sensible to indulge in such senseless follies. As yet, it is hardly possible that the mason can be so thankfully ignored by the architect, as by the engineer, but much may yet be done by the aid of the bricklayer to emancipate the builder from the tyranny of the mason, until the increased use of concrete in architecture, will enable the services both of mason and bricklayer to be dispensed with, except in cases of dire necessity. Looking at these facts, it is melancholy to see the British mason, with the terrible example of the puddler and ironworker staring him in the face, refusing to take advantage of the remaining term of his existence and so hastening his inevitable doom."

It is a somewhat remarkable fact, in connection with this subject, but well known to all employers of labour of every class, that the gradual advance in wages, that has been going on for thirty years past, is attended, not only by a marked deterioration in the appearance and condition of all grades of workmen, but also in the quality of their productions. It is no longer possible in this country, to obtain the same highly and carefully finished work, from men in any branch of industry as when the price of labour was 50 per cent. lower, and the weekly time extended to sixty or seventy-two hours instead of fifty-two. On the Continent, this is not so much the case, wages have no doubt increased somewhat, everywhere, but the

hours of toil, remain nearly what they were. The distinguishing characteristic however of the foreign artisan is, that he usually takes an honest pride in the excellence and durability of his work; and irrespective of the mere sordid profit on his wares, manifests a real interest in their artistic perfection and in the repute attaching to them.

While his English rival is wasting months of invaluable time in the ignoble occupations of smoking, expectorating and boozing, muddling his brains, and from long inactivity, daily allowing the accuracy of his eye, and expertness of hand to deteriorate, the thrifty French, Belgian, German, Swiss or Italian artisan plods steadily on, and is now rapidly distancing the supine and indolent Britisher, in the very productions for which half a century ago, his ancestors were unrivalled. But perhaps among the hosts of competitors, springing up, all around, none are likely to be more formidable than the shrewd far-seeing Americans. Years ago, various would-be politicians, "stumped" the country over, and at last impressed their credulous hearers, and the Legislature to boot, with the conviction that Free-trade was the one and only specific needed, for all the ills whereby trade was assailed. "Let England," it was boldly asserted, "but set the example, and all other countries must of necessity follow in her wake." No doubt, had that prophecy been fulfilled, the boon would have proved highly acceptable, but as it is, no other nation has adopted her Quixotic example. Even her own colonies are at this moment actually loudly clamouring for higher and higher import duties, to prevent competition with their own manufactures. Jonathan, who had craftily held out delusive hopes; when appealed to; replied with significant wink :—

"All hail the American Aigle,
Proud Vulture of Freedom all hail,
Thou fowl whom no man can invaigle,
Nor put salt on thy beautiful tail"!

The United States, far from removing protective duties, has

increased them to such an extent as almost to preclude the introduction of most of the staple articles of British manufacture! The consequence, is a steady diminution of a trade which, as lately as in 1872, amounted to £40,736,597, and had dwindled in 1874 to £28,241,809, while the exports from the U. S. to England, admitted free, of any protective duty *here*, had in the same time advanced in value, from £54,663,948 to £73,897,400! thus exhibiting a balance of trade against this country of nearly twenty millions, and this balance will most assuredly go on increasing each successive year. Many important articles of export formerly, will henceforth be produced in unlimited quantities in the United States.

Steel rails, for which there was, until quite recently, a very large demand, throughout the United States, are no longer exported thither at all. All that are required, being manufactured of just as good a quality, from American iron, with American coal. In the first three quarters of 1874 the total declared value of steel rails exported from Sheffield to the States was £356,180. In the last quarter of 1874 the value fell to £1,156. In the first quarter of 1875 the value was £2,301; and since that date the trade has been a thing of the past. Since 1864, when the record begins, the greatest exportation of Sheffield steel, steel rails, cutlery &c., to the States occurred in 1872, when the declared value was £1,734,626. The smallest exportation was in 1875, when the total value was £691,232—the falling off as compared with 1872 being no less than £1,043,394. Here then is an important branch of industry which has been effectually knocked on the head, by successive strikes.

In like manner, there were, in Manchester, old-established works, carried on, upon so large a scale, that they occupied some seven acres of valuable land in the heart of the town. Here iron bridges, columns, gigantic girders &c., were turned out in vast quantities and despatched, all over the world. The

firm employed many hundreds of men, and for a long period, all went well, and the profits were, if not considerable, at least fairly remunerative. By-and-by, union agitators found their way within the precincts of the works in question. Strike after strike was organised in times of depression, whenever the firm had entered into contracts, that often scarcely enabled them to do more than keep their hands on, and their plant employed. Wages were advanced by little and little, till it was found that not only was there no margin of profit, but that costly and extensive operations, were actually being carried on at a loss. There was, of course, no alternative, but to complete the contracts on hand, to close the business, dismiss the hands, and sell off the plant. Men who might have easily earned amongst them, some £1,400 or £1,500 a week, were thus by their own acts, turned adrift to live upon their union funds or to starve.

The late Lord Lytton used to say, that he only knew of two rules, that had no exceptions. "If," said he, "you see a man smoking, in the daytime in Pall Mall, you may be sure that he is a 'cad;' it is equally certain, that any mechanic who deliberately engages in 'a strike' is either a knave or a fool." The latter rule, at any rate, is now a self-evident proposition.

Railway engines again, being produceable at a cost of £600 each, less in America than here, are finding their way to Europe and the colonies, while on several English railways already, most of the engines are wholly of Belgian construction.

The people who write and prate, for the alleged benefit and enlightenment of British artisans, instead of urging them to waste their days and their savings on strikes; if they wish really to serve their *clientelle*, ought to warn them against the egregious folly of attempting, as they call it, "a war to the knife, with capital!" To class monarchy and priestcraft and capital, in one category, and to term them "anarchy," is lan-

guage that might be expected from an inmate of Colney Hatch, but to find "educated" British mechanics, not only accepting but applauding these and similar teachings, argues a degree of obtuseness, not to say of blindness to their own interests, that would be surprising even in a Bushman. By a succession of strikes, extensive works, the property of three different firms which had for a long series of years given highly-remunerative employment, in the aggregate to no less than 11,730 men, were disposed of, at a prodigious loss no doubt to the owners, but to the far more ruinous detriment of the "slaves" who insanely drove the capital and the trade on which their very existence depended, into other channels. Then came the inevitable final issue, abject misery, starvation and beggary. No chance of benefit to any in all this, but to the union officials who promote successive disasters of the kind, and draw their pay, for bringing their followers to ruin. The papers teem meanwhile with paragraphs, such as this :—

"From South Wales come stories of the most pitiful suffering. Colliers who a few years ago, were indulging in every luxury, ironworkers who at the same time squandered their easily-earned money, with lavish prodigality, are now enduring the bitterest pangs of hunger. Eye-witnesses tell us, that the guardians of the poor have refused to give the people in the workhouses their Christmas dinner on the ground that many of the ratepayers will themselves have to go without, that men go to work with nothing but a morsel of dry bread in their dinner tins, that others are living upon such diet as raw cabbage-leaves and the pieces they can snatch from the pig-troughs, that in one instance at least, a family lived for a week upon brewer's 'grains,'* and that all over the Merthyr and Crickhowell district it has been found necessary to supplement the ordinary poor-law relief, by soup-kitchens and various forms of private charity. It is impossible to disguise the fact, that the people who are now suffering most severely, are precisely those who have taken the most prominent part in the war of labour against capital. 'They helped to force up wages to an unnatural point, and as a consequence trade has deserted the district. When those wages were very high, South Wales miners and ironworkers lived with a riotous profusion which disgusted even their best friends.

* Mr. James Brogden, writing from Queen Anne's Gate, on the 3rd January, 1878, says, "The case of a family, for a time subsisting on brewer's grains and treacle at Aberdare, is a positive truth ; but it is one in which the father had the opportunity of getting suitable work at a fair remuneration, but he preferred the grains and degradation to honourable employment."

Still, like the daughters of the horse-leech, they cried, 'Give, give,' until overburdened capital would stand no further demand, and men like Mr. Crawshay found themselves compelled to close their works."

The entire stoppage of the vast works of Mr. Crawshay, of Mr. Gadley, together with those at Aberdare and Cwm Avon, was accomplished solely by the action of the men themselves, under the overbearing and tyrannical dictation of the "educated" delegates or strike-leaders of their trades' unions.

Now though there were in 1877 upwards of 200 strikes in some fourteen different trades, in the cabinet trade alone there were seventeen; in the printing trade eight; yet in scarcely any one instance, did the men obtain what they sought. At Saundersfoot colliery, in South Wales, the hands were out eight-and-twenty weeks; at Dronfield, thirty weeks; at Dods-worth, twenty-eight weeks; at Clackmannan and Fife, nearly thirteen weeks; and after all, they had to submit to the terms originally proffered. At Longton, the miners were out four months, lost over £32,000 by their strike, and then begged to be taken on, upon the masters' terms. At Macclesfield, 4,000 hands were idle for some time, at a cost to their fund, of £100 a day. At Bolton, in August last, 12,000 hands struck, and were out of employment many weeks at a cost, in loss of wages and in the support of idleness, of £12,250 a week! The joiners at Wolverhampton, struck work for six, and at Manchester for eight months, during which they expended £13,168 out of their reserve fund! The Clyde shipwrights, were out for twenty-three weeks, and had to accept harsher terms at the end, than they could have had at first. The cabinet-makers at Carlisle were on the strike for six months; the nut and bolt makers of Darlaston for sixteen weeks, and were actually compelled to work for lower terms than were originally proposed by their masters. Yet it would seem, that all the experience acquired, all the hardships undergone, all the ignominious defeats sustained, have been of no real benefit to those whose folly has already brought upon them such severe punishment. For at a

meeting of Leicestershire miners held at Coalville as recently as the 19th March, it was unanimously resolved, "That seeing the general movement now being made by coalowners throughout the country, to reduce the miners' wages, this meeting considers that the time has come, when the entire mining population of the kingdom should arouse themselves to a sense of their position, thereby becoming thoroughly combined, and put a stop to the effort now being made to starve them into the acceptance of terms which are not only distasteful and unjust, but unworthy of a civilised land."

In plain English, the local "strike leaders" and others interested in keeping up the war against capital, finding their importance dwindling and their baneful occupation gone, in consequence of the resumption, on the part of their dupes, of industrial habits, avow their intention of attempting to organise a universal strike of the entire mining population of the kingdom—about as egregious an act of folly and wickedness combined, as it would be possible for misdirected ingenuity to devise; it is however, fortunately practicable.

Mr. J. Corbett, M.P. for Droitwich, and proprietor of the Stoke Prior Salt Works, has lately issued "a few words of friendly counsel" to his workmen, in which he tells them, "There are some workmen at Stoke the nature of whose employment, may not admit of their being employed otherwise than by day-work. To them I appeal by saying, 'I do not wish to reduce your pay, but I expect you to do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage; and as honest men you are bound to do that.' I am afraid there are agitators, who may tell you that the less work you do, the better it will be for trade, the higher will be the price of the articles in the production of which you are engaged, and the better your position. But if any persons tell you such rubbish, they are either wilful misleaders or ignorant pretenders, and merit the contempt of every honest workman. They are for the most part men whose

occupation it is, to cast their nets in troubled waters. Beware of them. Having just returned from America, I know from personal examination and inquiry, the misery and suffering which trade-unions and strikes have brought about in that quarter of the globe. It is in a great measure from trades-unions and strikes, that we are all now suffering in this country, and recent facts and figures go to prove that such misguided men are driving trade after trade out of Old England, never, I fear, to return."

Lord Fitzwilliam made a very sensible reply, and administered at the same time a sharp rebuke to some of his colliers, who having been some time on strike, were beginning to find themselves necessitated to reduce their daily allowance of tobacco and beer. Having addressed a memorial to his Lordship, expressive of their readiness to resume work on the old terms; Lord Fitzwilliam wrote as follows:—"Let me ask you, what right you have to expect me to entrust large sums of money to your care, and again to expose myself, and those who act for me, to the annoyance and troubles of the last few years? We have the highest authority for knowing that 'a house divided against itself cannot stand;' and I have no wish to re-open Stubbin Colliery until the workmen have learnt, that in the long run their own interests and the interests of their employers, are one and the same, instead of being opposed to each other, as false friends would try to make it appear."

The only really effective way, of rendering abortive, the evils of attempted strikes in future, is to cope with them on their own ground, by means of similar organisations on the part of the masters. This is now, though somewhat tardily, being accomplished. A national association of master builders, is, at last, being instituted. Its head-quarters will be at Liverpool, with ramifications extending to all the principal towns in the kingdom. It will take prompt and energetic measures to secure mutual support and united action against all combinations of

workmen, commenced with a view to restrict the building trade, either in respect of hours of labour, piecework, overtime, employment of apprentices, the use of machinery, &c. If properly conducted, this association cannot fail to break up such attempts as have of late so repeatedly been made at tyrannical dictation, on the part of those who have thereby wrought so much mischief to themselves and others.

During the past year only, the wages lost, must certainly have amounted to some hundreds of thousands of pounds, without taking into account the losses of the masters and of the small tradesmen, and to say nothing, of the trade driven away to other countries, the misery endured by thousands of families and the demoralisation engendered. It is hardly possible indeed, to picture to the imagination, a more deplorably miserable object, than one of these wretched creatures, who has been half-a-dozen weeks on strike. Never very remarkable for neatness or cleanliness, he, before long, loses all regard to decency, prowls about in squalid garb, with the abject look of a criminal ready to engage in any villainy. The dark annals of Sheffield, and other places tend to show, too, that this is no fanciful comparison. There, for a long series of years, crimes, the very recital whereof, cannot be listened to, without horror, and including the most cruel and diabolical murders, were constantly perpetrated by dastardly unionists, upon the honest free-men who, in preference to banding with them, toiled hard, to support themselves and their belongings by the labour of their hands. It never seems to have occurred to any one of the thousands of these deluded unionists, while sitting in tap-rooms, or sullenly smoking in their denuded dens, that even a dozen years of unremitting toil, at the advanced rate of pay for which they struck, would not suffice to refund their pecuniary losses, to say nothing of all the concomitant wretchedness they had brought upon themselves. What howls of execration, what tumults, what riots would have ensued, had one-tenth of

the evils, they voluntarily submitted to, been caused by some imprudent measure on the part of the Government !

Yet, it is, with the mischievous object of extending the franchise, wholesale—to intellects such as these—that people even more fatuous, if possible, than they, are incessantly agitating ! As if men who had so little judgment, forethought or reason, in matters concerning their own most vital interests, were fit to be entrusted with even the most fractional share in the administration of matters, requiring the study of years to comprehend, much more to direct. But it has been very truly said, that the promoters of unions and strikes are not amenable to reason. They proceed on the know-nothing plan. “They will have no history, no philosophy, no bridge of any sort with the rational and responsible world,” as an able correspondent of the *Times*, observed in a very remarkable letter that appeared on the 8th January last. “Their governments are inscrutable mysteries. They dart thunderbolts out of a cloud. They shake the operative sphere, till every working man trembles in his shoes, and can no longer call his soul his own. Some of these bodies count as many adherents, or subjects rather, as a second-class State ; but they have no Parliament, or really representative legislature. If the workpeople were really represented by delegates chosen by ballot, or if the question of a strike came ever to be decided by ballot, it is probable the result would be found very different from the present ; for a large number of workmen declare themselves unionists and strikers much against their will. There can be no argument with such bodies, any more than with secret societies claiming mysteries and oracles and initiations of their own. Who can argue with the Sultan, or the Pope, or with Molly Maguire ? Who would have argued with the Roman Augurs, or with any other mode of enveloping statecraft in a veil of mystery ? The British people affect Constitutional methods in a few matters of national import, but are most indifferent to

them on a thousand minor points. It requires some nerve and self-possession, for a man to hold his own and make a stand against a whole torrent of weakness and delusion. There always enters, too, the undefined hope of something that may come of a concerted movement, managed by confident and loud-talking men, possessing the first requisite of eloquence—the appearance of absolute conviction. But if any inquiring persons would address themselves to any members of these unions, whether on or off strike, they would find that no mode of argument usual, and, indeed, obligatory, in the House of Commons, for instance, would be accepted, or be intelligible, with the general class of unionists. Here and there they might find a man with whom they had a common understanding on the matter in question, but all they would get from him would be the admission that he must go along with the rest, and that therefore it was of no use to argue the matter. The strength of this possession, evil as I think it, is so great and so universal as to suggest that, after all, there is not so much difference between our people and some of the populations they hold to be the special victims of barbaric oppression. Why pretend to talk of free institutions and self-government when the greater part of the workmen of this country are any day liable to find themselves under a moral compulsion to cease from work, and to accept the doles of secret combinations instead of the wages of a master standing before them and doing all things in the light of day?”

He further took occasion to inveigh against “the enormous, overgrown, and still-increasing eleemosynary laws and customs of this country. The British workman fights with that feather-bed always ready for him to fall upon. Let things come to the worst, there is the legion of utterly-mismanaged charitable institutions, with outdoor relief in the background. That myriads of strong and skilful men should be under such a spell that they must knock off, and go about with their hands in their

pockets, at the orders of some mysterious junta is ridiculous enough, but hardly more ridiculous, than the collateral and highly-significant fact, of large populations and classes in which the very law of existence, is for the father of the family to spend every sixpence he earns, with the certainty that his wife and children are safe in the hands of the gentry and clergy, vying for the honour and merit of their maintenance. It is not too much to say that there are whole towns, handsome suburbs, residential districts, beautiful watering-places in which innumerable families of women and children are entirely fed, clothed, educated, and even housed by their 'betters,' while the husbands are rejoicing in perpetual bachelorhood. What is there to hinder a strike against a master or anybody else under such circumstances? Such a basis of society may seem rotten enough, but as it affords the opportunity of cheerful co-operation and society to the collectors and contributors of charitable funds, it commends itself all round. (Few people indeed, have even a remote conception, of the extent of the extravagant abuse of public moneys, for the benefit of a few individuals, that is constantly going on, under the head of so-called "public charities.") Complaints have from time to time been made as to the extreme difficulty found, in raising even moderate sums for purposes of national importance and world-wide interest. We are told, almost daily of explorations, surveys, publications, inquiries, worthy tasks for rich Orders, Universities, and Empires, for which it is vain to come to England. With a world in our girdle, we let all these things alone, falling into irretrievable arrears. Apart from grander works, all over this country there is everything yet to be done, for the elevation of the people and for the addition of elegance or culture to the dead level of useful industry. What stops it? What starves England, and prevents her using her wealth for her merited grandeur and her just adornment? It is simply this: Every sixpence the ordinary

good Englishman has to spare, *goes to support the wives and children of men who drink all their earnings.* When there are those who can commit this folly on the one hand, and this wickedness on the other, and when it seems to be the very constitution of English society in its most refined and sanctified form, what wonder that we should have strikes? Why should not the working classes be always on strike? It may come to that in the end."

But it is not only in the most ordinary mental faculties or in administrative ability, that the educated British operative is deficient. He gives evidence, on too many occasions—when it is in his power to do so—of the most reckless improvidence, unthriftiness and extravagance. The Rev. F. O. Morris, of Nunburnholme Rectory, not long since, in directing attention to this subject, cited the cases of various artisans in a midland manufacturing town, many of whom, with their families, could make from £8 to £12; single men earning £5 a week, and yet, though paid on Saturday evenings, they would come, on the following Monday night, to ask the manager for an advance of part of the next week's wages.

"And this not for any legitimate expenditure, for even those who had families lived generally in one room, kept no servant, and only employed charwomen. Nevertheless, well they might be in want of ready money, for often you would see a party setting out on a Sunday for an excursion to some place or other, in a carriage with four horses, and dressed in the most extravagant manner, but at the same time with much taste, owing, no doubt, to their employment being in the lace trade. A charwoman told the wife of my informant, that she knew one married couple who could earn £7 a week, who often came to her on a Thursday, to borrow a shilling, their money being all gone. They lived in two rooms, very badly furnished. A needlewoman also told the lady that she knew a couple who earned £8 a week, or even more, between them, who lived in two rooms, wretchedly furnished, without even a cup or saucer besides the two they used, to give a friend a cup of tea; that the woman would give four or five guineas for a dress, and had given as much as six guineas, which she would wear all day from the first thing in the morning till it was shabby, when she would buy another as expensive, or even more so, according to the fashion. She never cooked their own dinner, but bought the most expensive things, took them to a public-house to be cooked, and dined there, eating and drinking afterwards. The 'hands' in the trade of the place, would often order, for one week, black tea at 4s. a pound, and

green at 6s. They would also buy cucumbers at 1s. and 1s. 6d. apiece, beefsteaks for breakfast at 1s. 3d. a pound, and would only eat them fried in butter; salmon in like manner when it first came in, at 3s. or 4s. a pound, and lamb at a guinea a quarter. For more light fare, they would buy oysters at 2s. or 2s. 6d. a dozen, put down gold on the counter, and eat them as fast as a man could open them for them. My friend saw two men thus eat 10s. worth, standing at a stall in the market-place. A man earning £3 a week, paid on the Saturday evening, got into a row with the police on the Sunday, was fined 25s. on the Monday, and not one out of a hundred or more of his fellow-workmen, could advance him the money to pay the fine with, and he had to borrow it of the foreman. Another was earning £4 a week. His master told him he ought to lay by. 'Oh,' said he, 'I can spend all I make.' 'But,' said the master, 'what shall you do if the times are bad with your wife and children?' 'Let 'em go to the Union,' said he. The master himself told my friend this. Mr. Baker, the Inspector of Factories, in one of his reports, stated that a moulder, his wife, and boy on an average earn £5 10s. 6d. a week. He mentions a case of a moulder, his wife and three children earning £8 7s. 2½d."

He also subsequently stated, with regard to strikes:—"We have heard, perhaps too much of them during the last few years. But those who strike, are either thrifty or unthrifty. If thrifty, how is it that they do not support themselves when on strike, on their accumulated savings out of high wages, instead of falling on the union for their daily support, at the expense of those of other trades in all parts of the country, which, if it were the case of persons resorting to a parochial union for relief, they would, I presume, consider a discreditable thing? If unthrifty, that is *Q. E. D.*"

The unthriftiness of the working classes, is, however, no new subject of complaint. The Rev. W. Borlase, rector of St. Just, Cornwall, inveighed against it, more than a century ago. Writing in 1771, he says:—

"We hear every day, of murmurs of the common people, of short wages, of dear provisions, &c. There may be some reason for this, our taxes upon the necessaries of life are heavy, but the chief cause, is the extravagance of the vulgar, upon the *unnecessaries* of life. There may be in my parish some fifty girls, above fifteen years old, and, I daresay, forty-nine of them have scarlet cloaks. There is scarce a family in the parish, I mean of common labourers, but have tea, once, if not twice, a day, and in the parish almshouse there are several families, but not one without their teakettle; and brandy when they can purchase it.

"Your journeymen again, at London and elsewhere, have their clubs and

newspapers, and sometimes worse amusements, if worse there can be, than some of them. In short, all labourers live above their condition. They continually clamour for higher wages—that is, for more drink.”

The lapse of a century, and the advance of education, has made little difference in this respect. Higher pay and more beer, is still the cry, although those who occasionally attempt, somewhat impotently it must be admitted, to vindicate the character of the working man, generally affect great indignation when the fact is quoted, that the artisan or the labouring classes are the greatest consumers of spirits in the country. Some little time ago it was shown, that a certain public-house near the Houses of Parliament, especially resorted to by the more respectable class of artisans, was some few years since in the market. The price asked and received, for the lease and goodwill was £20,000, the returns being stated, and admitted correct by the purchaser, as £12,000 per annum, or just £1,000 a year more than the entire expenditure for wine, beer, and spirits of the Carlton, the Junior Carlton, the Army and Navy, the Guards’, and the Athenæum Clubs put together. Since the increase in the price of wages, the returns of this house have gone up considerably. Within a radius of 150 yards from this public-house there are no fewer than nineteen others, each doing a vast business. It may be added, that the returns of the one public-house in question, are 50 per cent. more, than the whole expenditure of the Westminster Hospital, which has always in its wards 220 in-patients, without taking into account the many thousand out-door patients to whom its beneficent aid is extended.

One of the results of the diffusion of “education and intelligence” amongst the artisan class, has been to induce them to direct their attention to what they are pleased to term the amelioration of the laws relating to land! They have adopted the notion, that if they could only obtain what they call “free land,” their meat and flour and bacon would be greatly

cheapened. They have a sort of hazy idea, but which they are incapable of explaining, that if all tenancies for life were abolished, and if it were made illegal for a man to settle his estate, there would be an immediate reduction in the price of beef and mutton, although, of course, there is not the slightest shadow of a basis for this very ridiculous delusion. A far more mischievous one, is that, which seems to have been gaining ground of late, founded, apparently, on the belief that all the commons, and what are termed waste lands, in the kingdom, are the absolute property of "the people," and that every attempt to inclose a common, is in the nature of a sacrilegious robbery! A variety of attempts, have of late been made—some of them attended with very serious consequences—to enforce this doctrine. This is the way, the "intelligent and educated operative," having adopted the above somewhat communistic creed, sets to work to override the law of the land. The occurrence took place in January last, and is thus recorded in the *Times* of the 22nd of that month:—

"**EPPING FOREST.**—A band of about one hundred respectably-dressed artisans and labourers, have made a descent upon Epping Forest, and have levelled a large quantity of fencing. They arrived in four conveyances, each drawn by four greys, and acted under the orders of a leader, who gave the name of Mr. George Burney, of Millwall, Poplar, and described himself as a commoner of Loughton, and Chairman of the Epping Forest Preservation Society. They were provided with axes, saws, hammers and other tools necessary for the work. Mr. Burney marshalled them into three gangs, and the fences fell before them with extraordinary rapidity. They first demolished about a mile of fencing on land of Mr. Borwick, in the parish of Wanstead, which that gentleman is said to have purchased from Lord Cowley for £20,000. They then drove on to Buckhurst Hill, and levelled about half a mile of a fencing inclosing land belonging to Mr. N. Powell, an Essex magistrate, and another half-mile belonging to Mr. Gellatley, of Loughton. Having stopped for luncheon at the Crown Inn, Loughton, they next proceeded to demolish fences belonging to Mr. Abbott and Mr. John Chilton, of the Robin Hood Inn. The total damage is laid at about £2,000."

Other transactions of a similar nature have taken place elsewhere, accompanied by flagrant outrages. At Fulham, in March, 1878, fences, &c., were burnt, which had cost a very large sum to erect. The police looking on, and not venturing

to interfere. Now, although it does not fall precisely within the scope of the present work, it may not be amiss to indicate, very briefly, what is actually the law on the subject of commons; more especially since so much misapprehension exists on the subject, and the notions extant, directly militate against the rights of property. One writer has gravely enunciated, as his view of the origin of commons:—"First, that various patches of land, being possibly of little value, were held in common, by the residents or freeholders of various parishes, and were by degrees appropriated or used by them for their special benefit. Secondly, that to prevent undue encroachments, lords of the manor were subsequently appointed, who presided over Courts, in which certain rules and regulations to secure law and order were passed, &c. Thirdly, that a lord of the manor, is merely a trustee for the benefit of the commoners, having no right whatever to any personal advantage from the minerals, &c., under the surface of the commonable land, or to any beneficial interest therein." These or similar crotchets having for a long time passed current unchallenged, and having been reiterated with laudatory comments in the cheap press, little surprise need be felt at their adoption by large numbers of working men. Nothing, however, can be more opposed to the simple truth, than any portion of the hypothesis above quoted.

Manors, as they at present exist, are, for the most part, of Norman introduction, though the institution was not unknown to the early Saxons. A manor was, primarily, a tract of land, technically termed "*manerium*," and so called, as Lord Coke seems inclined to think, from the word "*mesner*," to lead. The tenants being under the guidance and direction of their lord, who retained for his own use such portions of the land as he required, distributing the rest, as he thought fit, to freehold tenants, to be held of him in perpetuity. The lands kept by the lord, were termed *terræ dominicales*, baronies, lordships or

demesne lands; whereof part was kept for the actual use of the lord and his family, while portions of the rest, were held in villenage. The residue was termed the lord's waste, and comprised roads and commons of pasture, for the lord and his tenants. Every lord or baron was entitled and empowered to hold a domestic court, called a court baron, to punish wrongs occurring within his manor, and to settle disputes among his tenants. If it happened that one baron or lord paramount owned several manors, his jurisdiction was called an "honor." According to Comyn, there were eighty such honors in England. Under the Saxons, there was a large class living in England in a state of servitude—they, their children and effects, belonging, like his cattle, to the lord of the soil; they were employed on the most servile works, and were removable at the will of the lord. The Normans, to a certain extent, enfranchised many of this class, by administering to them the oath of fealty. They were thereupon styled villeins (from the Latin villa) because they lived for the most part in villages, being employed in agriculture, whereas their Norman masters deemed war, the only pursuit worthy of their attention. These villeins belonging as they did, individually and collectively, generally to lords of manors, were either annexed to the manor, and called villeins regardant, or they were transferable from one owner to another by deed, in which case they were called villeins in gross.

In either case they could, if stolen, or if they ran away, be recovered by legal process, like horses or bullocks. They supported themselves as best they could, on small portions of land, held at the will of the lord, for the villein could acquire no direct property either in lands or goods, but in process of time, many lords of manors, having for a great length of time allowed their villeins, to occupy without interruption, their several holdings, in a regular course of descent, the common law gave them at last a title to hold their lands, on the due

performance of their wonted services for the same, and agreeably to the custom of each particular manor, as recorded on the rolls of the several manor courts, or, as known traditionally, from constant and immemorial usage.

The only title-deeds that such tenants could produce, were copies of entries upon the said rolls, witnessed by the steward. They were thence called tenants by copy of court-roll, and their tenure was known as copyhold. All copyholders are, consequently, descended from villeins.

A commonable right, or a right of common, is best defined as "the profit one man has in the land of another, such as to feed his beasts, to catch fish, to dig turf, to cut wood," &c., and the right is thus termed, from the community of interest subsisting between the commoner and the owner of the soil, or between the various commoners having similar rights.

Common of pasture is either (1) appendant, (2) appurtenant, (3) because of vicinage, or (4) in gross. Common appendant, is a privilege enjoyed by the occupiers of arable land belonging to a manor to turn out upon the wastes of the manor their horses, kine or sheep. It originated in this way:—When a lord granted (or enfeoffed any one, of) a piece of arable land to be held, for services to be subsequently rendered, it became thereupon necessary to allow the tenant (or feoffee) to depasture his cattle on certain portions of the waste, for he could not plough without oxen or horses, and he could not, of course, let them graze on his corn land. It was only, therefore, in respect of arable land that common appendant could originally be claimed, though of course at the present day, it might be claimed as appendant to a pasture farm, "for the land, says Bacon, shall be presumed (where there is usage to sustain the claim) to have been all originally arable."

Common appendant cannot be created now, and all such existing manorial temures must have originated before the 18th year of Edward I.

Common appurtenant arises from no connection of tenure nor from any absolute necessity, but may be annexed to lands in other lordships, and may extend in respect of hogs, goats, or the like. It can only be claimed by grant or by long usage amounting to prescription.

Common, because of vicinage, occurs occasionally where the inhabitants of two contiguous townships have intercommoned, the cattle of either locality, mutually straying over both the lands pertaining to the two townships. This is merely a permissive right to excuse a mutual trespass, and prevent litigation. But either township, may at any time exclude the other, though both may immemorially have intercommoned.

Common in gross, is in no way connected with the tenure of land, but is annexed by grant to an individual and his heirs.

Common of pasture, may be limited to certain seasons, or it may extend throughout the year. The right to turn out beasts, &c., is restricted to the number of cattle maintainable on the land, whereto the right is appendant or appurtenant. Any claim to an unlimited right (unless of common in gross) would be deemed void.

By the statute of Merton, passed 20th year of Henry III. (1236), the lord of a manor may inclose against common of pasture so much of the waste as he pleases, for tillage or wood ground, provided he leaves common sufficient for such as are entitled thereto.

The General Inclosure Act, 41 George III., c. 109, consolidates a number of regulations, making them applicable to every case of local inclosure, and the 7th William IV., c. 115, further facilitates the inclosure of open and arable fields in England and Wales, enacting that such inclosures may take place without the sanction of an Act of Parliament, provided the consent of two-thirds in number or value, of the persons entitled to rights of common or other rights therein, be obtained.

It will be sufficiently obvious, therefore, that, in every instance where commons of pasture exist, the lord of the manor, is lord paramount of the soil, and is the absolute owner of all minerals under the surface, the tenants of certain adjoining lands, having limited rights of pasturage over the same, and these are in all instances ascertainable without difficulty and with scarcely the possibility of error. As for the general public, although commons are necessarily open and liable to be trespassed over in all directions, no one can claim a *legal* right to ride, or even to walk over them, except the commoners, and they only in order to drive their cattle on, or to take them off.

The many attempts that have, in these latter days been made on the part of others than the commoners, to put forth and establish claims which have not, and never could have had, any existence, only serve to show that the tendency to "barefaced robbery, chicanery, unprincipled scheming and mean dodging," freely used at indignation meetings, to denounce the conduct of the proprietors of the soil, ought to be applied to those and those only, who seek to wrest from lords of the manor, territorial rights, held by as ancient and as indefeasible titles as any lands in the kingdom. It will thus be seen, that the alleged claim, on behalf of the public, to any rights, such as have of late been imagined to exist, are entirely devoid even of the least foundation. Such errors are constantly liable to arise, when people attempt to reason upon imperfect information, or where there is an absolute inability to draw correct inferences from undoubted facts.

There is another favourite topic, with those blatant demagogues who delight, as the *Saturday Review* truly said of J. Bright; in "teaching the broad doctrines of envy, hatred, and malice against all persons above the grade of artisans and labourers, and never shrink from enlisting the worst passions of the lowest and poorest of mankind, against the inequalities of fortune, seeking moreover to sanctify their wicked efforts by

the phraseology of religion." The constant subject of animadversion, with people of this stamp, is the unequal distribution of land and the alleged negligence of what they call "the State," in not bringing into cultivation, for the benefit of "the people" all the waste lands in the kingdom, generally computed by them at from thirty to fifty millions of acres, though the actual quantity, not utterly irreclaimable, does not exceed three millions of acres. Of course, before "the State" could deal with this land, it would have to be acquired from its present owners, and its quality must indeed be wretched, if it did not fetch in the open market at least £5 per acre. Now we can compute pretty accurately, from what the Duke of Sutherland, has for a long time past been doing, in the way of reclaiming waste moorland in Scotland, what would be the outlay attendant on the operation. His expenditure has been, for many years £18,000 a year, in the formation of farms of from 300 to 400 acres with suitable tracts of sheepwalk. The cost of the operation, varies from £32 to £38 an acre. In England, similar work, would certainly exceed £40 an acre, if economically conducted by private individuals, and most assuredly, not less than £50 an acre, if carried on by Government.

So that with the purchase of the land, the breaking up, draining, fencing, erecting suitable buildings, formation of roads, &c., "the State" would have to provide for an outlay of two hundred and seventy millions without the chance of a remunerative return, certainly for half a century! The Duke of Sutherland and his successor, can hope for no returns during their tenure. Supposing that there may be no lack of tenants, the third generation may perhaps be fortunate enough to receive $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 per cent. on the present outlay. But the advocates of "the State" land speculation, would cut away even the chance of this miserable result. What they clamour for, is the division of the land into small holdings of from five to twenty acres, and that too, when every one, who has studied the

subject, knows that in these days of free-trade, none but the well-to-do occupants of large farms, have the smallest chance of paying their way and of making both ends meet. There are over England thousands of small farms which can scarcely be let on any terms. Landowners are everywhere called upon to reduce their rents, which, as matters stand, barely exceed 4 per cent. on the prime cost of the requisite buildings, so that the land is literally "thrown in," and yields no interest whatever, on the sum paid by the owner for the fee simple.

Nor can any rational man feel surprised at the vast depreciation which has taken place of late years in agricultural land when we find that in 1876, the amount paid by this country to foreign nations, for corn, cattle and meat, was no less than £87,129,386; in 1877, it was £96,879,737. For live stock in 1876; we paid to other countries £7,260,303, and in 1877, £6,015,690. The items for fresh meat were much larger, consequent upon the shipments from America and Canada of quantities of carcasses of beef and mutton. The total sum paid for foreign stock live and dead was, in 1877, £17,313,674; in 1876 it amounted to £19,030,455. For corn, last year, the sum paid was £63,192,224; in 1876, £51,534,648. Butter cost in 1877, £9,538,305; cheese, £4,763,053; and eggs, £2,472,481, to be compared respectively with £9,702,624, £4,251,428, and £2,610,231.

Thirty years ago, these were the predicted consequences of Free-trade, at the time that measure was carried, in compliance with the importunity of a handful of interested individuals in this country, though in opposition to the experience, the tenets, and the ruling principles, then and since, of every other nation on the face of the earth!

It is a favourite tenet of the present day, that the voice of the majority should decide all questions. As matters stand with regard to free trade, the "Ayes" are represented by an insignificant section in this country; the "Noes," by an aggregate

of hundreds of millions in every part of the globe. Free trade would probably be very generally acceptable were it once universally adopted. As it is, England has adopted the principle, but finds to her regret that all other nations prefer MONOPOLY. They will condescend to take her gold, for whatever she chooses to buy, but they will take—on equitable terms—nothing she has to sell. The reciprocity is all on one side!

In a very sensible letter, addressed to the *Times* by Lord Bateman in November last, the subject was very ably treated, and his remarks well deserve attentive consideration, especially now that many, find to their dismay, no symptoms on the part of any other country to dispense with protective duties. "We have," says Lord Bateman, "to compete on unequal terms with other foreign countries, who are robbing us of our profits, paying nothing to our Exchequer, and underselling us at the same time. When the capitalist finds that his trade is leaving him, and that his profits are reduced to a *minimum*, it follows that the workmen, depending upon him, must suffer in like proportion, and as a consequence, the rate of wages must come down, or employment must cease. Strikes, lock-outs, and painful and undeserved distress are the inevitable results.

"Granted, that the theory of free and unrestricted commerce with all quarters of the universe is as bold as it is magnanimous; granted that the idea, by whomsoever originated (and advocated by no one more consistently than by our late good and wise Prince Consort), is both grand and glorious in its conception; granted that to give effect to it has been the aim, as it has been the long-accepted policy, of successive Governments, it cannot be denied, that its fatal 'want of reciprocity' has, from the first, checkmated our philanthropic efforts, and obliged us now to confess, after thirty years of trial, that in practice, our free trade is at best, but one-sided, and that, while we are opening our ports to the commerce and manufactures of the world free

and unrestricted, other countries, without conferring upon us any reciprocal benefit, are taking advantage without scruple of our magnanimous, but disastrous (because one-sided), liberality.

“It is of no use to blink the question. Facts will speak for themselves. In defiance of all arguments and all persuasion, not to say entreaty, on the subject, these awkward facts still remain. Our overtures to other countries are disregarded. Our commercial treaties are not renewed. Our own trade is in a sinking and unprofitable condition. Our exports show a lamentable and alarming and increasing deficit. Our Exchequer is affected. And, worse than all, not a single country in Europe, beginning with France and Germany and ending with Spain and Switzerland, to say nothing of the United States of America, or our own Australian Colonies, can be cajoled, by the most specious temptation, into following our example of free importations, or opening their ports to the commerce of Great Britain and of the world, unrestricted by safeguards, in the shape of duties, framed to protect their own native industries.”

It would seem even, that the *Times* which at one time strongly advocated the views of the clique, whereof Cobden and Bright were the mouthpieces; subsequently modified them materially, for in a leader that appeared long after free-trade had become law, the following remarkable passage occurs:—

“For many years after the victory of free-trade, it was impossible to persuade foreign nations—and the conviction was a source of enormous evil—that the men who were conspicuous in working out this vast revolution”—that is, Bright and Cobden—“did not possess an overpowering influence in this country. It is now quite clear, not only that they do not possess such an influence, but why it is impossible they should possess it. The advocates of peace, have become the supporters of war, and the apostles of free trade, the supporters of bounties and forced labour. *They have already answered their own arguments, and overruled their own authority.*” (!)

The same journal, on another occasion, exposed, in a masterly manner, the real purpose, these political charlatans had all along had in view, in advocating, as Lord Palmerston happily termed it, their "policy of cant and calico." It denounced in forcible language the main object of Cobden's whole career, as having been simply "to divide party against party and class against class; to fill the many with suspicion, of the few; and to represent the whole system of government, as a conspiracy against the freedom and the pockets of the people."

Mr. Bright aptly summed up his own tenets, and object, in a few words, when "this burly and unscrupulous apostle of universal hate," as the *Saturday Review* styled him, affirmed that:—"The glorious constitution, as you call it, of King, Lords and Commons, is a gross imposture, which it is the object of my life to reverse." The British constitution, however, is likely to prove, too hard a nut, even for a Rochdale cotton-spinner to crack! It is fortunate that this should be so, for, as T. Carlyle lately observed, "The liberalism of the present day, can only lead to the worst inferno of chaos!"

The unprejudiced reader who has carefully perused the foregoing pages, cannot but have arrived at the conclusion, that with all the heavy expenditure upon Government education as dispensed in this country, it has altogether fallen short of bringing about any of the advantages its promoters promised. Their efforts, hitherto at least, have egregiously failed, in promoting the welfare of the classes for whose benefit such a mass of cumbrous machinery has been set in motion. The experiment—however long it may be continued—upon its present plan, must necessarily prove abortive, while its cost must as certainly increase enormously, each successive year. What then, it will naturally be asked is the alternative proposed? The reply is a very simple one. Discard at once and for ever, all Boards, with their paraphernalia, ruinously expensive electioneering expenses, and still more extravagant attor-

neys' charges, incurred merely in hunting up and capturing truants.

Let the period of attendance at school, be limited to two, or, at the very utmost, to three years. It has been already shown, that in Germany and Sweden, children learn readily in three years, quite as much as is taught in English Board schools under the six standards of examination. It can only be sheer waste of time therefore, to enforce attendance here, for three years longer. The "standards" under the new code for 1878, are given at the end of this volume, so that the reader will have no difficulty in arriving at a decision on this subject. Abolish all gratuitous instruction, and all the nonsense in the shape of catechisms, professing to give a smattering of geography, astronomy, geology, physiology &c.

"To know
That which before us lies, in daily life,
Is the prime Wisdom ; what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us, in things that most concern
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek."

From the examples that have been cited, which the experience of any single school inspector could readily extend a thousandfold, it will be seen how futile is—and ever must be—the attempt to give infants in classes, any instruction on such matters, that can be of the slightest use to them in after life, even if they retain any of the meaningless jargon they have been drilled to repeat by rote.

It would almost seem, as if there was a settled determination on the part of the members of some Boards, to oppose energetically the adoption of all suggestions savouring in any respect of practical utility. All who are really acquainted with the inner life of the lower classes, know full well, that next to the need of food itself, is the utter want of even a rudimentary knowledge of how to deal with it economically, when obtained. There is no cookery so wasteful, so unsatisfactory, or so gene-

rally repulsive, as that of the labouring class generally, throughout England. By far the most essential service that could possibly be rendered to them, would therefore most assuredly be, the inculcation of a few practical lessons, teaching them how to render the simplest and most readily obtainable fare, nutritive and palatable, and that, with the least expenditure of time and fuel. This knowledge is very generally diffused on the Continent—there can be no reason then why it should be wanting here. At a meeting of the London School Board, held on the 27th March, a very sensible effort was made to extend a scheme initiated some time since and already yielding good results. The School Management Committee, proposed to establish a somewhat elaborate system for teaching cookery. The Board had some time since authorised the erection of a “cooking centre” in Marylebone, and contemplated establishing some three others elsewhere. The committee had prepared a somewhat more elaborate scheme, desiring to put up about twenty more. The Board declined to give effect to the recommendation, and referred the subject back to the committee, for further information. A very strong feeling of course manifested itself, during the debate to get rid of the subject altogether, though, as Mr. Heller, justly observed, food to the amount, in value, of £6,000,000 sterling was absolutely wasted every year, simply because the working women of this country, were wholly ignorant of the best way of economically treating such food as their means enabled them to provide.

One absurd objection was, that to have a cooking lesson in the school, would absorb the attention of the children, who might perhaps otherwise be listening to some unintelligible nonsense respecting the constituents of granite or gypsum, or a still more—to them—useless and incomprehensible disquisition on the Wars of the Roses, or the eclipses of Jupiter’s satellites! Others, who were unable to adduce a single valid argument against, by far the most useful suggestion that has as yet

emanated from this sapient conclave, nevertheless opposed it strenuously, because forsooth they alleged, that it was "the duty of mothers to teach their children to cook." One need scarcely feel surprise, therefore, at any pranks or extravagances, however ludicrous, on the part of people, who can gravely imagine that those who confessedly know little or nothing of an art, requiring considerable skill and practice to attain, are the best people to instruct others therein. If there be even a glimmering of sense in such an argument, why should it not be carried to its fullest extent, and why should not all School Board instruction be wholly dispensed with? It is undoubtedly just as much the duty of parents to teach their children everything, that is already pretended to be taught in Board schools, as to instil into them the humblest culinary axioms. If, however, the parents are altogether too ignorant or too indolent to acquit themselves of their responsibilities in these respects, and the ratepayers do not object vicarially to relieve them of their duties, that portion of the earnings of the working classes that ought to defray the cost of the education of their offspring will infallibly find its way into the till of the beershop, and so long will the existence of the Boards be tolerated, and the public be edified by their vagaries. But it is true now as it was three hundred years ago, that:—

"Folly in Fools, bears not so strong a note
As foolery in the wise, when Wit doth dote."

The mere dry acquisition, of the terms employed in ordinary scientific catechisms, is of no value except as an exercise of memory. Attempts to bring the most superficial acquaintance of deep and important scientific truths, within the grasp of ordinary capacities, simply vulgarises them, without making them really more intelligible. Book-lore is of course absolutely indispensable, but it is worthless, unless followed up with a very great amount of careful personal investigation, accompanied by close and accurate reasoning, in all deductions from

ascertained facts. The knowledge thus acquired cannot fail to possess sterling and permanent value; it will ever afford its possessor genuine satisfaction, will enliven the days of his pilgrimage, and will "charm his pained steps over the burning marle."

But it is idle to imagine that such knowledge, or even any useful substitute for it, can be dispensed, in ladlefuls to infants sitting open-mouthed, in rows, even in the best-regulated Board school.

Extend to the utmost, and encourage in every way the Voluntary system by all means, increase the number of industrial schools, let useful trades be taught as thoroughly and extensively as practicable. By this means, possibly, in due course, a race of honest, trustworthy and really intelligent operatives and mechanics may be trained up, to supply the place of the idle, negligent, dissolute and worthless, that now constitute so large a proportion of the artisans of all denominations. There is ample room for more training ships, like the "Goliath," the "Havannah," the "Indefatigable," the "Cumberland," the "Mars," the "Southampton," or the "Wellesley;" or, for reformatories, like the "Akbar," or the "Cornwall," or the model one at Feltham. These are, each and all, doing a vast deal of incalculable good, at an average annual expense of about £20 a boy. There seems really no valid reason why, in many cases, means should not be adopted to make these training ships, in a great measure, self-supporting. Some guarantee might be obtained, from the owners of the merchant vessels, in which the lads subsequently obtain berths, that a portion of their earnings, for the first few years, should be set aside to recoup the cost of their education. The system of apprenticing them and of paying premiums, of from £30 to £45 with them as at present, is open to grave objection. Most of the boys apprenticed from the "Southampton," run away at the end of a year. The "Wellesley" has wisely aban-

doned the system, because only one, out of sixty-six lads indentured served his time! Thirty-three per cent. of the boys from the "Goliath," apprenticed for four years, with premiums of about £35 each, abscond. Twenty-five per cent. of the lads apprenticed from the "Chichester" discharge themselves.

The expense of training, is necessarily considerable, but it is after all, £2 6s. a year less, than the cost per head, of maintaining pauper children in London district schools, while the accruing benefits are obviously discernible, inasmuch as probable criminals are unmistakably converted into really intelligent and properly-trained able-bodied seamen.

As regards the cost of the maintenance of pauper children, of whom there are in the different "District Schools" in London eight thousand, costing £183,000 a year (or on the average £22 6s. per child), the expenses are found to vary very considerably, and much more than might have been anticipated in different parishes. Thus in St. Pancras, each child costs the large sum of £37, while in Lambeth and at Mile End, they are clothed, boarded and lodged, for £17 only!

At the Islington schools, bacon costs 68s. a hundredweight, while Shoreditch pays 93s. Cheese costs 50s. at one and 80s. at another. The Central London pays £8 a ton for potatoes, while Mile End pays only £3 10s. The National Boarding-out Committee, under Mr. Francis Peek, point out these facts as tending to show the need of a centralised Board for all London. They also indicate the great cost of the District School as compared with the Boarding-out plan. The same committee show, that at a cost of much less than £10 per annum, children are boarded out in Scotland and ignore the Poor Law, for pauperism under the system, is diminishing there. It is also urged, that teaching children domestic economy in an institution where everything is on a grand scale, unfits them altogether for the humble appliances of working homes. At Brixham, in Devonshire, there is an admirably-managed chari-

table institution, entitled the "Seamen's Orphan's Home," where a number of lads are carefully lodged, suitably and properly educated, and trained for the sea, under the auspices and constant supervision of the Rev. Herbert Mayo. Their health and condition are excellent, and they are sufficiently fed, yet the total annual cost of the board of each boy does not exceed £9 5s. This shows how much, can be effected in these matters, by real thrift and good management. Would that there were, over England, many more institutions similar to this, and as efficiently and satisfactorily managed!

It should not be forgotten, in relation to this matter, that the funds consumed in keeping up the London School Board establishment on the Embankment, together with the vast sums worse than wasted in "compulsory law proceedings," would of themselves more than suffice to maintain ten training ships, turning out two thousand five hundred young sailors yearly! Can any one, capable of forming an opinion on the subject, hesitate to say, which mode of employing the money would be the more beneficial to the country at large?

It would be a very useful expenditure of time and trouble if those who constitute the Educational Department, were to make themselves well conversant with the system which has for a length of time been working admirably in Belgium. They would then know, how thoroughly sound and practical instruction, can be imparted, to the undoubted benefit of the recipients, at a minimum of cost to the community. They would, moreover find, that due attention is paid to the inculcation of wholesome discipline and of habits of subordination and orderly behaviour, whereby the manners of the pupils are permanently formed. And, after all, manners are of far more importance than laws. "Upon them," in the words of Burke, "in a great measure, the laws depend. The law teaches us, here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarise or refine us; by a

constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe. They give their whole form and colour to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them."

The gradual, but very general deterioration of late, in the manners of all classes, has long been the subject of complaint and regret. It has more especially been very generally remarked, that within the last few years, the uncouth boorishness of the lower orders, no less than the habitual lawlessness and insolence of street lads, is incomparably greater, since they have received the unspeakable benefits of a liberal education, of which, most assuredly it cannot be said, that :—

"Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros."



The following letter, which appeared in the *Times* of the 20th March, while these pages were passing through the press, was too late to be noticed, as it fully deserved to be, in the body of the work; but its contents are so true and so apposite, that it has been thought right to reproduce them here.

SCHOOL BOARD EXPENDITURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

SIR,—In an article in your paper of the 5th inst., on this subject, you very justly allude to the feeling which is becoming prevalent among the rate-payers, that the policy of the London School Board is one of large and increasing expenditure, and it would certainly be interesting to know how the annual sum of £500,000 is made up. The ratepayers, likewise, would, I am sure, be glad to receive some explanation of the item of £18,383 for office expenses.

My object in troubling you is to call attention to the salaries and allowances paid and made by the Board to their school staff, and the almost certain consequence which must, sooner or later, result therefrom—namely, the total destruction of voluntary schools. It cannot be otherwise, for it is impossible for the managers of voluntary schools to carry on their work under the very disadvantageous circumstances in which they are placed.

As a manager and treasurer of large national schools, I have recently experienced considerable difficulty in engaging some assistant teachers, in consequence of the much higher salaries which are given by the Board than the limited resources of my schools enable me to pay.

According to the statement made by Sir Charles Reed, on the 28th of September last, the voluntary schools then had provision for 284,774 children, and the Board accommodation, existing and projected, extended to 220,549 children. It will be seen from this that, if voluntary schools are compelled to succumb, through the inability of the managers to compete with the School Board expenditure, no alternative will remain but for the Board to supply their places.

I dare say I shall be told that, in order to procure competent and efficient teachers, it is necessary to pay large salaries. I must take leave to deny this, and I point to the schools of which I am a manager in corroboration of my denial. I pay liberal, but not extravagant salaries, and the educational work is performed to the entire satisfaction of the managers and Her Majesty's Inspector.

It was only the other day that the Vice-Chairman of the Board proposed to largely increase the staff of teachers. If his proposal had been adopted, voluntary schools must have followed suit, or have been condemned as inefficient. Mr. Rodgers said that the increased cost had been "carefully considered," and, for the number of children in Board schools, it would amount to an additional £30,000 a year. We all know that the calculations of the Board

have hitherto been sadly falsified, and I have little doubt that the £30,000 would be £60,000, or perhaps more.

Had this proposal been carried out, it would have inflicted a grievous injury on voluntary schools, for it would have been simply impossible for the managers to raise the sum required to provide them with similar teaching power.

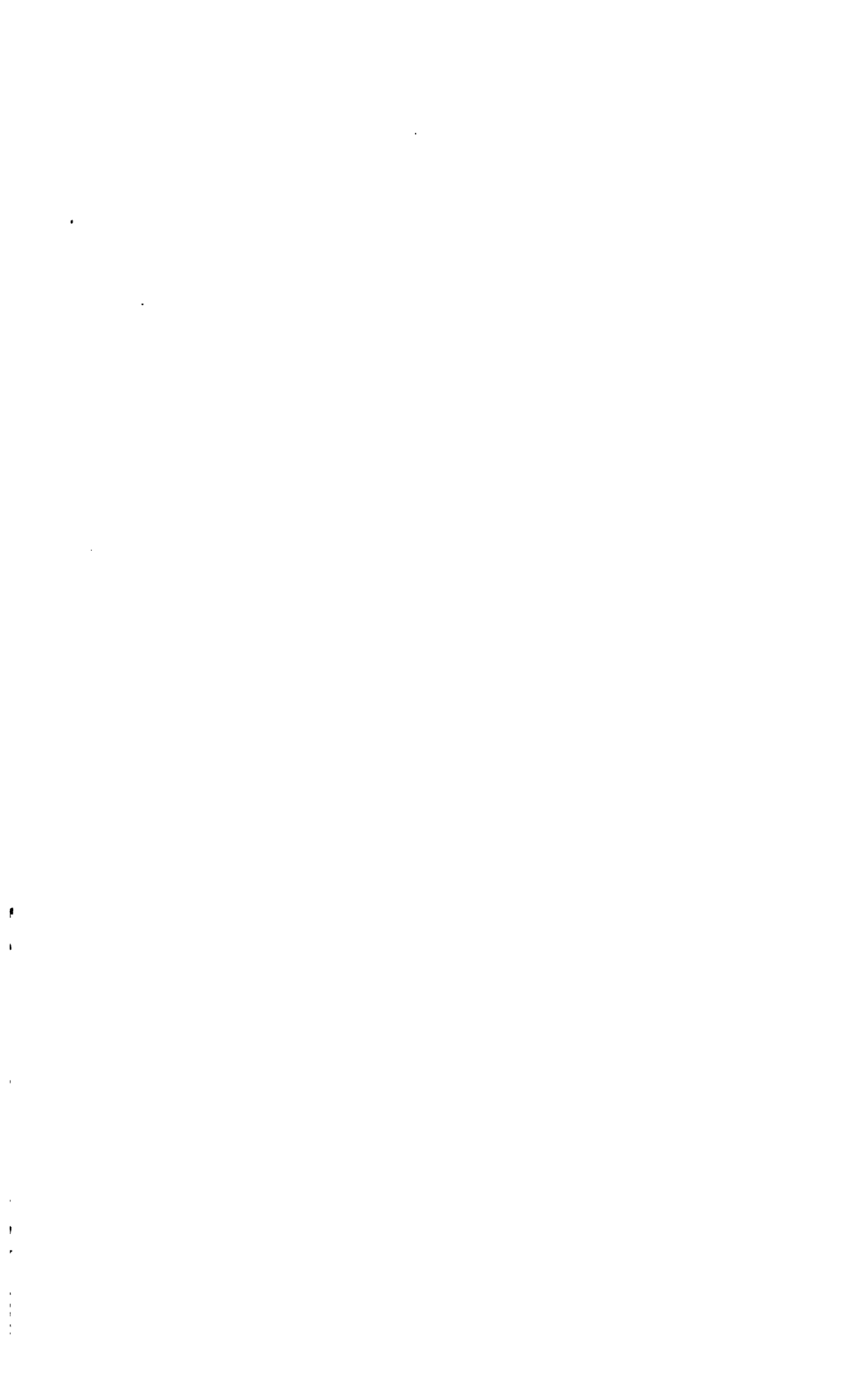
It will be a most unlucky day for the ratepayers when voluntary schools are destroyed through the action of the School Board, and the rates are doubled or trebled, as they must unquestionably be.

I cannot believe the Legislature ever intended that Board schools should supersede voluntary schools, and it seems to me a pity that some common understanding cannot be come to, so that a similar scale of salaries should exist in each; that both schools should work together harmoniously for one common good, and that the stronger, by reason of its ample means, should not crush and destroy the weaker, with its limited resources.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

WALTER JUSTICE.

58, Gordon-square, W.C., 14th March, 1878.



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